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PILLS AND EXCIPIENTS.

BY THOMAS S. WIEGAND, PH. G.

Read at the Pharmaceutical Meeting, November 17, 1885.

In the August number of the "Chicago Pharmacist" there appeared a paper upon pills, by Mr. Joseph Ince, taken from the "Pharmaceutical Journal and Transactions," of London. This with the examination of some pills of mercurous iodide, to which my attention had been directed, induced me to bring the subject before our meeting this afternoon. I do this with more pleasure as there are many here present who have not had sufficiently long experience to have attained that familiarity which practice and very extended observation can alone give them, that is necessary to decide the many points that are involved in the compounding of many of the prescriptions which direct the remedies to be dispensed in pillular form. It is hardly necessary to repeat the statements of the treatises on pharmacy, that the excipient should be in complete chemical as well as therapeutic accord with the medicines ordered; but, while it is admitted by all, very many, both of the prescribers and compounders, are either ignorant or negligent of these two laws.

The paper above alluded to, while giving a great many excellent formulas, has given some which are liable to very severe criticism, as a sample which I will submit will prove beyond all question. Another paper, published in the September number of the "Pharmaceutical Journal and Transactions," written by Mr. J. B. Morris, also contains hints and advice which, as it is almost impossible to find any full and systematic treatise upon this subject, it is well for all, especially the younger pharmacutists, to gather up as a part of the knowledge which ere long must decide their claims for skill in this part of their calling.

Some years since, the writer, in an article in the "American Journal

of Pharmacy," 1870, page 195, advocated, among other substances, extract of gentian as a valuable material for assisting the dispenser of pills; and, while it is undoubtedly excellent for very many cases, its use must not be resorted to indiscriminately. All those remedies which are readily reduced by the glucose, which is contained in this extract to the extent of 30 per cent, must be massed with an excipient in which glucose is not present. This will exclude confection of roses, honey, glucose itself, and even cane sugar, as it is changed by moisture and the air.

The remedies which should never be made with the last named substances are calomel, mercurous iodide, permanganate of potassium, oxide and nitrate of silver, cupric oxide, etc. The sample here exhibited of a mass made with mercurous chloride (calomel) and manna, only three weeks since, has undergone such change as to resemble one made from mercury with chalk. This of itself is quite sufficient reason why it should not be used; but when such a mass is treated with distilled water for a time, and the clear liquor decanted, liquor potassa communicates a pinkish tinge and liquor ammonia a whitish cloud, evidencing the presence of mercuric chloride, a result which is necessarily attended with danger. While alluding to this change it may be worth while to state that the well known and very valuable prescription of calomel, sodium bicarbonate and sugar will undergo similar change by exposure to the air, and hence the caution to have such powders frequently made, or only prepared when demanded by the immediate occasion.

It will be found for most of the readily reduced salts that a mixture of glycerin in which 4 per cent. of finely dusted tragacanth has been mixed, and kept for 24 hours before use, is a most admirable excipient; calomel and mercurous iodide pills are thus very well made. For nitrate of silver and permanganate of potassium, fullers' earth, which is principally silicate of alumina, is the most desirable substance, as any organic matter has the immediate effect of decomposing the salts.

The following formulas will enable us to overcome these difficulties: Nitrate of silver gr. viii, fullers' earth gr. xvi, water *q. s.*; ft. mas.; to be divided into xvi pills; reduce the nitrate of silver to powder, add the fullers' earth and rub till intimately mixed, when the water should be added until a good mass is secured. Potassium permanganate gr. xvi, fullers' earth gr. xxiv, water *q. s.*; divide in pills xvi; the permanganate should be powdered in a *perfectly clean*

mortar, the fullers' earth added, thoroughly mixed, and formed into a mass with water.

Another class of substances which are frequently troublesome are the resins and gum resins, and, by many, alcohol in small quantities is recommended, to enable the operator to obtain a plastic, tough mass, which it certainly accomplishes; at the same time the pill as it becomes old gets harder, and almost inert; while the use of Castile soap secures the former quality, and renders the mass soluble in the juices of the stomach. This excipient we have found most successful in making a satisfactory mass with camphor alone, or even with it and powdered capsicum, which is well known to be a most difficult combination to form into a good mass. A small quantity of powdered resin when added to camphor will also enable the dispenser to make pills quite easily and of small size; it must be used quite sparingly, or the pills in a short time will become so soft that they will lose their shape.

Pills in which any essential oil is an important constituent are also well known to be troublesome to the dispenser, who feels that he must conscientiously fulfill the order of the prescriber, and this we have found is most thoroughly attained by the use of powdered Castile soap. A formula which will serve as typical is as follows: *R*: Aloes pulv. gr. xii, podophyllin gr. iv, oil of hedeoma gtt. xxiv, pulv. sapon. hisp. gr. xii. Rub the oil and soap together till a smooth mixture is attained, then add the aloes and podophyllin, previously well mixed; make into a mass, and divide into 12 pills.

Creasote is also readily made into pills in the same manner. Pill masses containing deliquescent salts can be made by means of Canada balsam, or of soluble cream of tartar. The administration of deliquescent salts in pills is not frequent, and needs less notice than the ferruginous and scaled salts; these are of frequent demand, and several formulas have caused great annoyance to dispensers, Bland's pills being one of them. The use of a portion of dried ferrous sulphate, equivalent to the crystals ordered, has been found to overcome the difficulty, glycerin and tragacanth, as before described, being used as an excipient; the method of procedure being to rub the ferrous sulphate and potassium carbonate separately with a small portion of the glycerin, then mix them thoroughly. Should the mass be too soft, a small amount of tragacanth dust may be added.

The use of manna has been alluded to in the first part of this paper,

and while it is objectionable for some purposes, the writer does not wish to condemn its employment in many instances, as it is very well used in connection with small doses of quinine, morphine and the alkaloids; when these, however, are to be used in large sized pills, the quantity required is objectionable, and it may be replaced with advantage by glucose.

The frequent use of phosphorus in pillular form of late years makes it desirable to present a formula which will enable the dispenser to compound almost any of the prescriptions in which it is ordered. This is readily accomplished by keeping a mixture of phosphorus in butter of cacao, in the proportion of 1 grain to 15 of butter of cacao. The best method of preparing this is to put the phosphorus in a test-tube, cover it with a small quantity of the butter of cacao, and melt it and the fat by dipping the tube in hot water, when the remainder of the butter is added and well mixed. Of course in using this the mass is best kept surrounded with a vapor of chloroform, to prevent oxidation. When finished, the pills are to be coated with an ethereal solution of tolu.

In concluding these notes the writer hopes to show the results of some of these formulas, which want of time has prevented him from exhibiting to the meeting.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON COCAINE HYDROCHLORATE.

BY A. B. LYONS, M.D.

In a recent article on the salts of cocaine, the writer expressed the opinion that cocaine hydrochlorate formed crystals, even from an aqueous solution, which were anhydrous (see page 469). Subsequent experiment has shown that this is not the case. The crystals which form in an aqueous solution contain in fact two molecules, or 9.6 per cent. of water of crystallization. Such crystals are now met with in commerce, commanding a higher price than the smaller anhydrous crystals, which have, of course, greater intrinsic value.

Small crystals, also, are now met with, or a salt having only an indistinctly crystalline character, which contains either water of crystallization or hygroscopic moisture, to the amount of 6 or 8 per cent. of its weight. It is highly desirable that in any official description of the salt the quantity of water of crystallization admissible be distinctly

stated, and manufacturers should place on their labels a statement of the proportion which their product actually contains.

The description given of this salt in the new British Pharmacopœia contains the erroneous statement that it is readily soluble in ether, and otherwise characterizes the salt in a very imperfect manner. The description given of coca leaves, as having a "taste somewhat bitter and aromatic," omits certainly the most important characteristic of the drug—its benumbing effect, lacking which the leaves may be safely pronounced of no value.

ON AN INDIGENOUS SPECIES OF CROTON.¹

BY JOHN M. MAISCH.

A few months ago I was consulted about a plant which had been sent to this city by a farmer in the State of Georgia, with a letter in which the following statements were made concerning the properties of this plant:

"I do not know whether it will cure hay-fever, catarrh, consumption, or not; but I do know that it will cure several diseases. A tea made from this plant will give instant relief in cramp colic, will stop diarrhœa, and, by gargling, will cure sore throat, also any kind of ulcers in the mouth; it will also cure the colic in horses. A man was cured of eating cancer by the use of this plant; but I do not know how he prepared it. When the green plant is cut a drop of bloody water runs out; this blood applied on any kind of bruise, cut or bite will beat anything for healing that I have ever tried or seen tried; it will also stop the flow of blood. The plant appears to be perfectly harmless; I never heard of any one being injured by it."

It was not the extravagant statements made by a non-medical man that attracted my attention, but the fact that the plant proved to be a species of *Croton*, which genus comprises about 450 species, the large majority of which are arborescent or shrubby. The stimulant and tonic barks known as cascarilla, malambo and copalchi are obtained from this genus; the drastic and irritating croton oil is extracted from the seeds of one species, and a kind of dragon's blood is yielded by several Mexican and South American crotons. In addition to the preceding, other woody species of the same genus, indigenous to tropical Asia or tropical America, are more or less employed there, their properties being usually stimulant or acrid, or in some cases irritant.

¹ Read at the Pharmaceutical Meeting, November 17, 1885.

None of the herbaceous species of Croton appear to have been medicinally employed. In some older works *Croton chamædrifolius*, *Lamarck*, a perennial herb growing in the West Indian Islands, is mentioned as being used as a vulnerary and in various forms of tumors. But the plant has been transferred to another genus, and is now known as *Acalypha chamædrifolia*, *De Candolle*, while the *Croton chamædrifolius*, *Grisebach*, is an annual plant, and does not seem to have been used in medicine.

Croton tinctorius, *Linné*, an annual plant of the Mediterranean region, has likewise been transferred to another genus; it is now *Crotophora tinctoria*, *A. Jussieu*, or *Tournesolia tinctoria*, *Baillon*. It is cultivated in France, the cultivation being confined to Grand-Gallargues, a village in the neighborhood of Nîmes. The greenish juice in contact with ammoniacal liquids yields a kind of litmus, which turns red by acids, but does not become blue again under the influence of alkalis. Paint rags are made by dipping pieces of muslin into the juice and exposing them to the ammoniacal vapors arising from a mixture of urine and lime, or from horse-dung, until the desired color is produced. This material is stated to be mostly exported to Holland, where it is used for the coloring of cheese and of certain liquors.

Five or six herbaceous species are indigenous to the United States east of the Mississippi, three of which, all annuals, occur northward as far as Illinois and Virginia, while the perennial species *Croton maritimum*, *Walter*, and *Cr. argyranthemum*, *Michaux*, do not appear to extend northward beyond South Carolina. The last named species is the plant, the curative properties of which have been referred to above. The nearly simple root is from 2 to 3 inches long, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick at the neck, crowned with a broader irregular head formed from the stem bases, of a light gray-brown color, and breaks with a short non-fibrous fracture, which is whitish and shows a thickish bark, the inner layer of which is of a red color, and a porous medullium without medullary rays. The stem is about 12 or 18 inches high, branched, rather firm, and the lower portion somewhat woody; the leaves are alternate, about 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, with petioles of $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in length, firm and thick, oval, oblong or obovate in shape, entire on the margin, rather obtuse at the apex, and narrowed at the base; the mid-rib is rather prominent on the lower surface; but its branches are quite indistinct. The flowers are of a silvery whiteness and form

short terminal spikes, at the base of which the pistillate flowers are placed. All the aerial parts of the plant are densely covered with scales, imparting a peculiar lustre; these scales have become detached from the older portion of the stem, leaving minute circular scars, which remain visible for some time. Similar scars are also observed on the older leaves, particularly on the upper surface. The scales are formed of small glands, about 0.1 Mm. in diameter, and filled with a red mass; to these glands are attached from 50 to 60 colorless, elongated and stellately arranged cells, which project about 0.1 Mm., or a little more, beyond the gland, and are laterally cohering, except at the apex, which is free, pointed and usually somewhat curved or slightly hooked. The total width of the scales is about 0.3 Mm., or $\frac{1}{40}$ inch. The scales on the branches and on the leaves are alike. The root has a slightly aromatic and a more prominent and rather pleasant bitter taste. The leaves are more aromatic, and are decidedly pungent.

As far as may be judged from the physical properties, this plant probably does not possess any decided or very important medicinal virtues; still, in view of the reputation enjoyed by a number of the woody species of the same genus, it seems to be deserving of investigation. This was suggested more than twenty years ago by Prof. F. P. Porcher, in his "Resources of the Southern Fields and Forests;" the plant specially mentioned by him, *Croton maritimum*, is likewise covered with a silvery scurf, but it is confined to the coast districts, and has broadly oval and subcordate leaves.

MATERIA MEDICA NOTES.

Abstracts from Theses.

Cultivation of Peppermint in Michigan.—From his personal observations in the peppermint plantations, and from information received from mint growers, Dennis Reagan, Ph.G., describes the cultivation to be the same as was stated by M. Fred. Stearns, in 1858 (see "Amer. Jour. Phar.," 1859, p. 35), except that the planting is done annually, the runners of the preceding year being used for the purpose. If the plants are raised from seeds in a nursery, they are reset every two years. Peppermint does not sprout freely after the second year, unless the soil is very rich and loose and the preceding summer has been wet and warm, or the ground is boggy.

The oil obtained per acre varies between three and twenty-six pounds, the average being about sixteen pounds; new mint generally yields a few pounds more than the old, the quality of the oil being the same. The principal weed growing in mint fields is *Erigeron canadense*, *Lin.*; the large growers remove it carefully from the field, and plants which are overlooked are separated from the cut mint, which is smaller. *Erechthites hieracifolia*, *Raf.*, grows only in new clearings. Both these weeds are sometimes distilled separately, and the oils are occasionally used for adulterating oil of peppermint; oil of turpentine is also used for the same purpose. Oil of peppermint, when pure, is said to be rather slowly absorbed if dropped upon blotting paper, while it is at once absorbed if adulterated with any one of the three oils mentioned.

Assays of Cinchona Barks.—Henry Brandner, Jr., Ph.G., obtained by the pharmacopœial process the following amounts of total alkaloids. Bark represented to be

Cinch. succirubra	contained	7.78	per cent.	moisture	and	yielded	3.50	per cent.	alkaloids.
"	Callisaya, flat,	"	8.02	"	"	"	2.14	"	"
"	"	quills,	7.63	"	"	"	2.572	"	"

The test for quinine, as directed by the Pharmacopœia, gave negative results, and the solutions of the alkaloids yielded no characteristic color with chlorine water and ammonia, nor with chlorine water, potassium ferrocyanide and ammonia. The nature of the alkaloids was not ascertained.

Ailanthus glandulosa, *Desfontaines*.—Fred. Horace Davis, Ph.G., has subjected the bark of this tree to proximate analysis; it is not stated whether the bark of the branches or of the trunk was used for the purpose.

By exsiccation at 100°C., the air dry bark lost 7 per cent. of moisture; and on incineration yielded 5.92 per cent. of ash; of the latter 25.8 per cent. was soluble in water (potassium and sodium chloride and phosphate), and the insoluble portion contained calcium, magnesium and iron as carbonate, sulphate and phosphate. The bark was successively treated with petroleum benzin, ether, alcohol, cold water, boiling water and dilute acid; fixed oil, chlorophyll, resin, wax, sugar, tannin, albumen, gum, starch, pectin, oxalic acid and probably another crystallizable organic acid, soluble in alcohol, were obtained. Distillation with water yielded a trace of volatile oil. Alkaloids and glucosides could not be detected.

MATERIA MEDICA OF THE NEW MEXICAN PHARMACOPŒIA.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 556.)

Genciana. Although *Gentiana calyculata*, *G. mexicana*, *G. Hartwegi* and other species of this genus are indigenous to Mexico, and several of them are abundant, they are not employed medicinally, but the root of *G. lutea* is used. The first named species is known as *Flor de Santo Domingo*, or *Flor de nieve* (snowflower).

Gobernadora de Mexico, *Zygophyllum Fabago*, *Lin.*; *Zygophyllacæ*; grows in Mexico, but is indigenous to the Orient. The leaves are popularly used in baths and fomentations for relieving rheumatic pains, and the fruit preserved in vinegar like capers, hence the common name *falsa alcaparra*, and in English *bean caper*.

Gobernadora de Puebla, *Eupatorium veronicæfolium*, *Kunth*; *Compositæ*; in the neighborhood of Puebla. The leaves are used like the preceding.

Goma de Sonora is an exudation of *Mimosa laccifera*, produced by the hemipterous insect, *Carteria mexicana*, *Comstock*. It resembles grain-lac, from which it differs in being less deeply red, in having a taste resembling that of succinic acid, and in becoming elastic when heated; it is used against metrorrhagies.

Goma mangle; from *Rhizophora Mangle*, *Lin.*; *Rhizophoracæ*; in Tampico and other coast districts. It forms rather voluminous masses or separate tears, 5 Cm. or more thick, is reddish-brown externally, dark red internally, hard, breaks with a conchoidal and opaque fracture, and has a sweetish mucilaginous taste and a peculiar odor. It dissolves in water without leaving any residue except the impurities, forming a mucilage of less consistency than that of gum mezquite.

Another variety of *goma mangle*, obtained from *Rhizophora Candel*, *Lin.*, is in distinct slightly adhering tears, externally scaly, glossy, transparent, of little hardness, breaking with an uneven shining fracture, inodorous, of a mucilaginous taste, and dissolves less freely in water, but swells up and forms a thinner mucilage.

The gum is used in the Philippine Islands as a febrifuge, and in Mexico for relieving cough. The fruit is edible. The bark and also the fruit are used for tanning.

Goma de nopal. See page 450.

Gordolobo del país, *Gnaphalium canescens*, *De Cand.*; *Compositæ*; in temperate regions of Mexico. The flowers of this species, as well as of *Gn. Berlandieri*, *De Cand.*; *Gn. hirtum*, *Humb.*, and *Gn. viscosum*, *Humb.*, which are abundant near the capital, are used as a substitute for mullein as an emollient and pectoral.

Guaco, *Aristolochia fragrantissima*, *Ruiz et Pavon*; *Aristolochiaceæ*; in Colima, etc. The branches, which are stimulant and antispasmodic, are woody and twining; the bark is gray, thick and fissured; the cork rolled up; the wood whitish and with large ducts; the odor aromatic, resembling that of French marigold (*Tagetes*), and the taste bitter and aromatic. The drug contains a volatile oil, tannin, resin, bitter principle, gum, starch and salts. It enjoys considerable reputation as an antidote to poisoning by scorpions, vipers and other animals, and is used externally in purulent ophthalmia, blennorrhagia, chronic ulcers, vaginitis, etc. The powder is given in doses of 1 to 5 Gm., and an infusion is made containing 20 Gm. to the liter. *Arist. grandiflora*, *Swartz*, has analogous properties, and in Yucatan the guaco de San Cristóbal, *Ar. pentandra*, *Lin.*, is similarly employed.

In a similar manner are also employed the stems and leaves of different species of *Mikania* (*Compositæ*), namely, *M. Guaco*, *Kunth*, guaco de Tabasco or de Guatemala; *M. Houstonis*, guaco de Veracruz; and *M. Gonvelada*, guaco de Tampico.

Guarana, from the seeds of *Paullinia sorbilis*, *Martius*. The seeds of the Mexican species *P. barbadensis*, *Jacquin*; *P. costata*, *Schlechtendal*, and *P. pinnata*, *Lin.*, may perhaps be made to yield a similar preparation.

Guayabo, *Psidium pomiferum*, *L.*, and *Ps. pyriferum*, *L.*; *Myrtaceæ*; in hot and moist districts. The bark contains tannin 12.1, sugar and other matters soluble in water 13.8, resin and chlorophyll 1.7, calcium oxalate 30.8 per cent., etc. The root and bark are used as astringents in diarrhoea; the leaves as a vulnerary and resolvent, and the fruit as an anthelmintic and aliment.

Habilla de San Ignacio, the seed of *Hura crepitans*, *Lin.*; *Euphorbiaceæ*; in hot and moist districts. The seeds contain 50 per cent. of fixed oil, and are used as a drastic in doses of 0.05 to 0.10 Gm. They should not be confounded with Haba de San Ignacio or Cabalonga, the seeds of *Strychnos Ignatii*.

Hanchinol, *Heimia syphilitica*, *De Cand.*, and *H. salicifolia*, *Link*; *Lythraceæ*; in the State of Mexico. The leaves contain, according to

Alas, fat and chlorophyll 12, extractive and resin 14, bitter principle 9, gum 18, tannin 15, salts 5, tissue 27 per cent.; the resin is stated to be the active portion. The decoction is used as an antisymphilitic, and topically for the cure of ulcers. Alas states that the alcoholic extract is a good hemostatic, and the bitter principle, *nessine*, has febrifuge properties.

Heno, *Tillandsia usneoides*, *Lin.*; Bromeliaceæ; in the Mexican valley, etc. The plant is used as an astringent. This is the so-called *long moss* of our Southern States.

Hipericon. Under this name the flowering tops of several species of *Hypericum* are used for their astringent and balsamic properties, namely *H. perforatum*, *Lin.*, var. *mexicanum* (?), *H. denticulatum*, *H. fastigiatum*, *H. formosum*, *Humboldt et Bonpland*. A composite plant, *Tagetes lucida*, *Cav.*, vulgarly known as *periquillo*, is sometimes used in the place of the former.

Hiso de México, *Salvia axillaris*, *Mociño et Sessé*; Labiatæ; in Guadalajara, etc. Reputed to possess the properties of hyssop. The leaves are linear-oblong, acute, entire, narrowed at the base, and rough-hairy; the axillary verticils contain 2 to 6 flowers. The plant resembles thyme in aspect, and has an aromatic odor and bitter taste. *Verbena ciliata*, the *alfombrilla silvestre*, which is often substituted for the former, is sufficiently distinguished by being inodorous. *Salvia polystachya*, *Ortega*, and *Salvia linearis*, *Mociño*, are also frequently called hyssop.

Hojas de San Pedro, *Daphne salicifolia*, *Kunth*; Thymelacæ; in the State of Morelos. The leaves are epispastic; the bark might probably be used as a substitute for mezereon.

Huacamote is the starch of *Manihot Aipi*, *Pohl*.

Huamuchil, *Mimosa Unguis-cati*, *Willdenow*; Leguminosæ; in the hot and moist regions of the eastern slope of the Mexican cordillera. The bark is astringent; the fruit is edible, the juice of the seed produces an abundant secretion of the nose, and the powder is used for cleaning ulcers from maggots and for cicatrizing old ulcers.

Huanita, *Morelosia Huanita*, *La Llave et Lizarza*; Boraginacæ; in the State of Michoacan. The bark is used as an antiperiodic and astringent.

Huauzontle, *Blitum Bonus-Henricus*, *Reichenbach*; Chenopodiaceæ. The flowering tops are laxative.

Huinar, *Malva scoparia*, *Cavanilles*; *Malvaceæ*; in temperate districts. The root has considerable reputation in the cure of diarrhoeas.

Inciense (olibanum), *Ipecacuana blanca* (*Richardsonia scabra*), *Ipecacuana de las minas de Oro* (*Psychotria emetica*), *Ipecacuana oficial*, *Jaborandi* (*Pilocarpus*), *Jalapa oficial*, *Jalapa macho* (*Orizaba root*), *Jalapa de Tampico*, *Jaldre* (yellow orpiment), *Jengibre* (ginger), *Jitomate* (tomato; fruit used as an anodyne), *Kamala*, *Lactucario*, *Lanten* (*Plantago major*, etc.), *Laurel* (*Laurus nobilis*), *Lechuca* (lettuce), *Lenteja*, *Lentejilla* or *Panal* (*Lepidium virginicum*, *Lin.*; in diarrhoea), *Licopodio* (lycopodium), *Limon*, *Linaza* (flax seed), *Líquén Carragaheen*, *Líquén de Islandia*, *Lirio de Florencia* (orris root), *Lo-belia* (*Lob. inflata*), *Lúpulo* (hops) have all been admitted.

Ipecacuana del país, *Solea verticillata*, *Sprengel*; *Violaceæ*; on the hills of Santa Fe, west of the capital, etc. Cervantes Vicente found it (the root?) to be a good substitute for the officinal ipecac, if taken in doses double of those of the latter.

Jalapa de Querétaro, *Ipomœa triflora*, *Velasco*. The root is met with in circular fragments, about 10 Cm. broad and 2 Cm. thick; color gray on the flat, and darker on the convex portions; superficially rough from many gray fibres; odor and taste almost none. M. C. Jimenez ("La Naturaleza," i, 338) obtained from the drug brown extract (aqueous?) 14, resin 16, salts 10·5 per cent., etc. The resin is light yellow, when powdered nearly white, insipid, inodorous, soluble in ammonia with a green-yellow color, partly soluble and partly insoluble in ether. The drug is a drastic purgative; dose of the powder 1 to 2 Gm.; the extract 0·20 to 0·40 Gm.; the resin 0·10 to 0·30 Gm., and the tincture 2 to 4 Gm.

GLEANINGS FROM FOREIGN JOURNALS.

BY GEO. H. OCHSE, PH.G.

Nerolin.—Under the name of *Nerolin*, Messrs. Schimmel & Co. have placed on the market a white crystalline powder, soluble in 30 parts of 95 per cent. alcohol and in 25 parts of the fixed oils, sparingly soluble in water, as a substitute of the expensive oil of neroli. One part of nerolin is equivalent to ten parts of the oil. Several soap manufacturers use nerolin in the proportion of 20 to 30 Gm. to 100 kilos of soap.—*Pharm. Centralhalle*, xxvi, No. 43.

Acetic Ether in Poisoning by Illuminating Gas.—Dr. Leube states that he has used acetic ether where employees in gas-works had

become insensible from the inhalation of illuminating gas. He gives several drops on sugar, the patients soon revive, and in a very short time are again able to work.—*Archiv der Pharm.*, 1885, p. 716.

Metallic Magnesium in Fireworks.—The addition of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of powdered magnesium entirely conceals the green flame produced by barium salts, giving them a bright white light, similar to the electric light; to the strontium flame it imparts an extraordinary brilliancy. The following formulas yield good results: *White Light.*—Shellac 1 part, nitrate of barium 6 parts; add $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. powdered magnesium. *Red Fire.*—Shellac 1 part, nitrate of strontium 5 parts; add $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. powdered magnesium. The salts are mixed with the shellac, the mass fused and powdered; then the magnesium is added.—*Arch. d. Pharm.*, 1885, p. 714.

Sublimation of Oxalic Acid.—According to M. Siegfried, oxalic acid sublimates at several degrees below 100°C .

Iodol, a New Antiseptic.—Iodol manufactured by Silber and Ciamicina in Rome has been used in the surgical clinics of Mazzoni. Dr. Mazzoni finds iodol free from the disagreeable odor of iodoform, and does not produce symptoms of intoxication. It is a powerful antiseptic, aiding the formation of healthy granulations and occasionally producing local anæsthesia. Iodol is prepared from volatile animal oil by precipitating the pyrrol with a solution of iodine in iodide of potassium, thus forming pyrrol tetraiodide, or iodol. It is a brown powder, capable of being heated to 100°C . without decomposition; at a higher temperature it is decomposed, giving off iodine vapors and leaving a voluminous coke as residue. Iodol is very slightly soluble in water, and readily soluble in strong alcohol, but precipitated again on adding water. The addition of glycerin to the alcoholic solution does not precipitate it. Ether and chloroform also dissolve it. Tests: Sulphuric acid produces a green color, and by heating the alcoholic solution to which nitric acid has been added a bright red color is produced.—*Rundschau*, xi, p. 668.

Syrup of Hippurate of Calcium.—R. Acid hippuric, pure, 1; milk of lime, q. s.; hot water, 20 cc.; sugar 24; spirit of limon, 0.15. To a portion of the water, heated to 75 or 80°C ., add the acid and milk of lime; agitate, and test from time to time with test paper, until the solution is slightly alkaline; add balance of water and sugar and heat over a gentle fire. The solution of hippurate of calcium is the same without the sugar.—*Répertoire de Pharmacie*, 1885, p. 434.

The benzin odor of old syrup of tolu is attributed to the action of the calcium salts of ordinary water on the balsam of tolu at a higher temperature. M. Labre bases his observation on Mitscherlich's synthesis of benzin, *i. e.*, distilling benzoate of calcium with quick lime, thus forming carbonate of calcium and benzin, $C_{14}H_6O_4 + 2CaO = 2(CaO, CO_2) + C_{12}H_6$. Syrup of tolu made with distilled water does not acquire a benzin odor on standing.—*Répert. de Phar.*, Oct., 1885, p. 438.

Papaverine.—Dr. Guido Goldschmiedt states that the formula of papaverine as given by Hesse ($C_{21}H_{21}NO_4$) is incorrect. He proved by a number of experiments that the formula as originally given by Merck ($C_{20}H_{21}NO_4$) is correct.—*Pharmac. Post*, xviii, p. 1077.

To Detect Gamboge in Mixtures, etc.—Solutions containing gamboge are mixed with powdered glass, evaporated to dryness, powdered, and treated with benzin. If the benzin solution is colorless it is again shaken with the powder and sufficient hydrochloric acid to make the solution decidedly acid. Benzin does not dissolve gamboge in presence of soap. If after treating with benzin and acid the benzin solution is colorless, no gamboge is present. If, however, the solution has a yellow cast, it is filtered and tested as follows: To a small portion of the filtrate is added a dilute solution of caustic soda; if a red coloration is produced, gaseous ammonia is led into the remaining solution until it is saturated. The flakes which separate out are collected on a filter and washed with benzin before dissolving them in alcohol. This solution treated with an alcoholic solution of ferric chloride turns black, and on adding caustic soda the color changes from black to dark yellow, but never red, if gamboge is present. By this method Hirschsohn was able to detect 0.01 gram of gamboge.—*Phar. Zeit. f. Russl.*, xxiv, p. 609.

Impurities in Ether.—Boerrigter confirms the statement of other authors that ether frequently contains hydrogen peroxide and aldehyde. Ether should be kept in dry, tightly corked bottles. The ozone produced by the evaporation of ether, if water is present, converts it into hydrogen peroxide. Pure ether is not discolored by caustic potash, nor is alcohol affected by it unless air has access, when possibly aldehyde is formed.—*Phar. Zeit. f. Russl.*, xxiv, p. 584.

Digitalin, Digitalein and Digitin.—Digitalis is exhausted with water and the infusion is decolorized with animal charcoal, treated with acetate of lead and filtered. The filtrate is then treated with a mixture of 12 parts of liquor plumbi subacetatis and 1 part of spirit of ammo-

nia (liquor Dzondii). The precipitate, consisting of oxide of lead and the glucosides of digitalis, is washed on a filter, then made into a soft paste with water, and sulphuretted hydrogen passed into it. It is again placed on a filter; the filtrate contains all of the digitalein; but digitin and digitalin, being almost insoluble in water, remain on the filter together with the sulphide of lead. Chloroform dissolves the digitalin, and alcohol the digitin. Pure digitalin and digitin are obtained by evaporating the respective solutions. Picrotoxin and solanin are obtained in the same way, but are distinguished as follows:

The picrotoxin precipitate is mucilaginous, acquiring on the addition of concentrated sulphuric acid a saffron-yellow color.

The digitalin precipitate is gelatinous, and acquires a flesh color on the addition of concentrated sulphuric acid.

The solanin precipitate is granular, and on the addition of concentrated sulphuric acid turns dark; if sugar is added it assumes a violet color, gradually turning to blue.—*Phar. Zeit. f. Russl.*, xxiv, p. 561.

New Method of Preparing Cocaine.—Prof. Bignon recommends the liquid hydrocarbons as solvents for cocaine. He proceeds as follows: Coca leaves are macerated about 48 hours in a solution of sodium carbonate (20°), then dried and placed in a percolator with benzin, and again allowed to stand 48 hours. All of the cocaine which has been isolated by the sodium carbonate will be dissolved by the benzin. The benzin solution is shaken with water acidulated with hydrochloric acid (1-10), thus forming cocaine hydrochlorate, which dissolves in the water. The coloring and resinous matter which has been dissolved by the benzin remains with the latter, the acid solution containing pure cocaine hydrochlorate.—*L'Union Pharmac.*, xxvi, p. 456.

FOOD FOR INFANTS AND BREAD FOR DIABETICS.

BY DR. H. BEHNKE-REICH.

In "Zeitschrift d. Allg. Oesterr. Apoth. Ver.," 1885, p. 406-408, the author directs attention to a biscuit and a bread, the manufacture of which has been undertaken by H. O. Opel, of Leipzig, under the supervision of a chemist, Dr. Geo. Kerner.

The *nutritive biscuit* is intended for infants after they have reached the age of about four months, but is also quite agreeable to adults, and particularly strengthening to nursing mothers. It is prepared from

the best wheat flour, which is mixed with sugar, malt-yeast, table salt, condensed milk and nutritive salts in such proportions that the finished product has the composition given below. The nutritive salts are prepared by a pharmaceutical chemist, and, according to an assay by B. Kohlmann, made for the pharmaceutical district society of Leipzig, contain in 100 parts 6.66 phosphorus, 65.50 oxygen, 5.17 hydrogen, 3.00 carbon, 10.00 calcium and 9.67 sodium.¹ The dough, properly made, is set aside in a warm place for about an hour and a half, is then placed in suitable moulds, and when sufficiently porous is baked at a dry heat of 200°C. After removal from the oven the cake is exposed to the air for 24 hours, and is afterwards slowly roasted at a temperature of 100°C.

The analysis by B. Kohlmann showed a composition in 100 parts of biscuit of moisture 9.76, aliments of respiration 74.94 (including sugar 5.86), plastic aliments (albumen, etc.) 8.56, fat 2.58, inorganic constituents 4.16 (including calcium phosphate 2.25).

Properly preserved, the biscuit remains good for a long time. It has been used by Dr. Fürst, of Leipzig; Prof. Demme, of Bern, and many other physicians, with good success. The average weight of this nutritive biscuit is not given; but it is stated that two biscuits a day are sufficient for an infant between 3 and 6 months old, and four or five biscuits for a child a year old. The biscuit is softened in good warm cow's milk, which if necessary is suitably diluted with water, or it may be taken with tea, chocolate or beef tea. Dr. Fürst states that babies over 6 months old usually like this biscuit well, digest it properly, and are not subject to glandular swellings, as is often the case if fed on ordinary pastry or farinaceous food.

The *bread for diabetics* is prepared from pure fresh gluten, with the smallest possible quantity of amylaceous additions. Its odor and taste are pleasant, neither insipid nor sickly, and it may be taken by the patients for a long time without becoming repulsive. Kept in an upright position, it remains palatable for more than three weeks. Kohlmann found its composition to be as follows: moisture 22.03, protein compounds 20.56, fat 21.78, carbohydrates 24.28, cellulose

¹ Assuming that organic sodium salts are not used, the analysis corresponds approximately to a mixture of about 50 parts of crystallized sodium carbonate, 10 sodium bicarbonate and 40 calcium phosphate, the latter prepared by precipitating calcium chloride with sodium phosphate; such a mixture contains P 7.2, O 64.4, H 4.8, C 3.5, Ca 9.3 and Na 10.8.—EDITOR.

6.95, mineral constituents (including table salt) 4.40. A similar bread made by P. Ossian, of Paris, contains a larger percentage of carbohydrates (29.71) and of gluten, the latter being partly replaced by fat in the new bread, which thereby becomes more agreeable for continued use, and retains its softness for a longer time.

THE SOLUBILITY OF BINIODIDE OF MERCURY IN FATTY BODIES AND SOME OTHER SOLVENTS.¹

BY C. MÉHU.

Mixtures of fatty bodies with most chemical bodies are wanting in homogeneity, instable and of moderate quality. The water and alcohol usually employed to dissolve the chemical bodies with a view to their more thorough mixture with the fatty bodies volatilize more or less completely; hence the appearance of crystals, sometimes large ones, irregularly distributed through the fatty matter. Further, under the influence of water chemical reactions take place that modify profoundly the original composition of the mixture.

In such preparations I have frequently attempted to substitute solution by simple admixture, without the addition of any solvent, and more than once with entire success.² This note has for its object to call attention more particularly to the solubility of biniodide of mercury in oils, lard, vaselin and other solvents.

Oil of Sweet Almonds.—Oil of sweet almonds dissolves enough biniodide of mercury to satisfy most therapeutic requirements. The following experiments will give a correct indication of this solvent power:

If a mixture of 65 centigrams of amorphous biniodide of mercury and 50 grams of sweet almond oil be triturated in a porcelain capsule placed upon a steam-bath, complete solution will be effected at the end of about a quarter of an hour. This proportion of mercury—13 grams in 1,000 grams of oil—cannot be much exceeded, even with the aid of

¹ Paper read before the Sixth International Pharmaceutical Congress at Brussels. Communicated by the Author.

² In 1868 I pointed out the solubility of benzoate of iron and valerianate of zinc in fatty oils; I also dissolved ferric cinnamate in oils.

a more prolonged trituration. Upon being left to cool, the solution deposits rather rapidly about two-thirds of the biniodide it contained in distinctly formed yellow and red crystals.

Almond oil heated to about 180°C. dissolves about 80 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams. Upon this solution cooling it deposits numerous sulphur-yellow crystals of mercury biniodide, the deposit being pretty considerable by the time the temperature has fallen to 150°C. Collected upon a filter these crystals pass rapidly into the red modification.

Almond oil containing, while hot, 8, 7, or 6 grams of the biniodide in 1,000 grams, deposits the greater part of its excess of biniodide before completely cooling.

I have preserved without deposit and for several days, at a temperature of 25°C., almond oil containing 5 grams of biniodide in 1,000 grams; but this oil deposited a notable quantity of biniodide when the temperature fell to about 18°C.

Almond oil containing not more than 4 grams of biniodide of mercury per 1,000 grams has remained fifty days in a cold cellar without depositing the least trace of biniodide. It may, therefore, be considered that this proportion—4 in 1,000—should not be exceeded in practice.

In these experiments, with the object of insuring perfect preservation of the product, I used almond oil that had been previously heated for some minutes to a temperature of 220° to 250°C., and filtered after becoming quite cool. This treatment of the oil is like that I adopted in obtaining the stable phosphorated oil which has now been included in the French Codex. But almond oil of good quality, well filtered and not previously superheated, gives very satisfactory results.

In order to charge almond oil with a larger quantity of mercuric compound recourse may be had to various other compounds. Potassium iodide, for example, increases the solubility of biniodide of mercury in almond oil. Upwards of 50 grams of the combination (HgI_2), KI can be dissolved in 1,000 grams of the oil. For instance, 2 grams of biniodide of mercury and 73 centigrams of iodide of potassium having been dissolved in a steam-bath in 50 grams of almond oil, the solution after remaining six weeks in a cellar had only deposited some minute crystals of biniodide, due probably to the insufficient purity of the commercial iodide of potassium. I have raised the quantity of iodohydrargyrate of potassium beyond 75 grams per kilogram of oil,

without any sensible deposit taking place during cooling, or even after eight days.

Olive Oil.—At 100°C. olive oil behaves nearly like almond oil towards biniodide of mercury. It deposits slowly the excess of biniodide, and does not appear to retain more of it when cold.

Poppy Seed Oil.—At about 100°C. poppy seed oil dissolves notably more biniodide of mercury than almond oil. At that temperature I have dissolved 15.35 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams of the oil. When cold, poppy seed oil retains in solution three times as much of the biniodide as almond oil. A solution of 10 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams of poppy seed oil did not become turbid even after remaining ten days in the cellar. This experiment was made twice.

Nut Oil.—At about 100°C. nut oil dissolves 15 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams. In the cold, nut oil retains in solution about 13 grams of the biniodide per kilogram.

Poppy seed oil and nut oil are both drying oils; they are distinguished from almond oil and olive oil by possessing a solvent power a little greater when hot, and nearly three times as great when cold.

Castor Oil.—Castor oil is one of the most powerful solvents of biniodide of mercury. By heating in a porcelain capsule, in a steam-bath, to about 100°C., and using a small glass pestle as a stirrer, it is possible to dissolve 1 gram of biniodide of mercury in 25 grams of castor oil, or 40 grams in 1,000 grams of oil. Upon being left to cool, the oil deposits only half the dissolved biniodide.

A solution of 1 gram of biniodide of mercury in 40 grams of castor oil still deposits slowly red crystals of the biniodide.

A solution of 1 gram of biniodide of mercury in 50 grams of castor oil does not become turbid in cooling, and even after standing a month at the ordinary temperature it remains absolutely clear. This solution contains, therefore, one-fiftieth of its weight of biniodide of mercury. It appears to me capable of satisfying all therapeutic requirements.

The combination of the biniodide with the bichloride of mercury dissolves readily in the oil. At the temperature of the vapor-bath it is easy to dissolve 80 grams of biniodide of mercury and 48 grams of bichloride of mercury in 1,000 grams of castor oil. Only a small proportion of the mixture separates during the cooling; the deposit contains a whitish crystalline combination of the two constituents. The castor oil retains, when cold, nearly 10 per cent. of a mixture of

equal equivalents of biniodide (eq.=227) and bichloride (eq.=135.5) of mercury, only traces separating in course of time of the slightly yellowish white crystalline compound already mentioned.

Iodide of potassium increases considerably the solubility of biniodide of mercury in castor oil. In a steam-bath, at a temperature near 100°C., I have dissolved easily 200 grams of the compound $(\text{HgI})_2\text{KI}$ in 1,000 grams of castor oil. Iodohydrargyrate of potassium, which contains 73.1 per cent. of its weight of biniodide of mercury, dissolves, therefore, in five times its weight of castor oil at a temperature near 100°. The solution kept for three weeks at a temperature of 20°C. gave only traces of a yellow crystalline compound. The solubility of the iodohydrargyrate is, therefore, the same in hot and in cold castor oil.

Lard.—If lard be melted in a steam-bath in a porcelain dish, and 1.25 gram of biniodide of mercury be added per 100 grams of lard, the mixture being stirred with a glass pestle, all the biniodide can be dissolved. The solution is clear and colorless; but, upon being left to cool, it becomes rose-colored in solidifying and deposits biniodide of mercury, which can be seen to be distinctly crystalline under the microscope.

When this solution—12.5 grams of biniodide in 1,000 grams of lard—is diluted with its own weight of lard it still becomes rose-colored in solidifying, and deposits crystals of biniodide of mercury. But lard which contains not more than 4.5 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams no longer deposits crystals of the biniodide in cooling.

Vaselin.—Vaselin dissolves little biniodide of mercury, even with the aid of heat. In a steam-bath, and using a small glass pestle to rub down the mercuric compound, the quantity dissolved is not sensibly in excess of 2 grams of biniodide in 1,000 grams of vaselin. The solution is limpid and colorless. Left to cool it becomes strongly rose-colored; it even deposits the biniodide upon the sides of the capsule before solidifying. Upon augmenting gradually the quantity of vaselin the solution of 1 part in 1,000 assumes a clear salmon tint in cooling, and deposits numerous crystals of biniodide. A solution of 1 in 1,500 when cool has a very marked orange-rose tint, and deposits very distinct crystals of biniodide. From a solution of 1 in 2,500 there still separate during the cooling perfectly distinct crystals in quantity sufficient to impart to the cold mixture a slight rose color.

Upon lowering the proportion of biniodide to 1 in 4,000, the cool liquid no longer deposits the least trace of biniodide.

Carbolic Acid.—Heated to about 100°C. carbolic acid dissolves a little more than 20 grams of biniodide of mercury in 1,000 grams. Left to cool the solution deposits more than half the biniodide it contained; the exact determination of the quantity is hardly practicable in consequence of the solid condition of the cold mixture.

Benzin.—One thousand grams of rectified commercial benzin dissolves 20 grams of biniodide of mercury at a temperature near 100°C. At the ordinary temperature benzin retains in solution only 4 grams of the biniodide in 1,000 grams.

Various Mercuric Compounds.—In England and the United States the oleate of mercury in solution in oils is frequently employed. It is obtained by triturating—preferably in the cold during twenty-four hours, or heating to a temperature exceeding 70°C.—a mixture of 10 parts of yellow oxide of mercury and 90 parts of purified oleic acid. Such a preparation keeps badly in proportion as it is weaker in mercury; it deposits metallic mercury as the oleic acid becomes transformed into oxyoleic acid. An oleate with 20 per cent. of oxide of mercury has also been recommended as keeping better, it being diluted with oleic acid or olive oil as required. The observations of Squibb,¹ Parsons² and Tichborne³ have, however, demonstrated the great instability of these mixtures, which are in no way comparable to definite and stable officinal preparations, such as the solutions of biniodide of mercury in oils that I have here described.—*Phar. Jour. and Trans.*, Oct. 17, 1885, p. 327.

COCA LEAF CIGARS AND CIGARETTES.—Dr. Lewis Lewis, Philadelphia, has been using cigarettes composed in part of coca leaf and partly of tobacco, for about nine years, in the treatment of throat affections. Dr. F. E. Stewart ("Phil. Med. Times," Sept. 19, 1885,) has employed a cigar made of coca leaf with a wrapper of mild imported tobacco; also a cigarette of coca wrapped with rice paper, and a "smoking tobacco" made of coca without admixture of any kind, which may be smoked in a pipe. By the use of these preparations the peculiar effects of coca were obtained, though in a milder degree than after taking it internally.

¹ "Pharmaceutical Journal" [3], xiii, 530.

² *Ibid.* [3], xv, 656.

³ *Ibid.* [3], xv., 576

CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHEMISTRY OF RHUBARB
ROOT.¹

BY M. KUBLI.

Any one who may have occupied himself with the chemical investigation of the three vegetable drugs, rhubarb, senna leaves, and *Rhamnus Frangula* bark, will have made the observation that there is present in them a peculiar body containing nitrogen and sulphur, which especially accompanies the active constituents of these drugs with great persistency. In resuming some interrupted studies of rhubarb root in the laboratory of the hospital pharmacy at Dünaburg, the author sought first to ascertain what part this peculiar body played in these vegetable substances, and whether it might not be considered as belonging to the non-organized ferments, such as emulsin, myrosin, etc. The present paper is a preliminary contribution to the solution of this question.

After Schlossberger and Döpping had first recognized the presence of chrysophanic acid in rhubarb² the author demonstrated that the acid occurred in the form of a glucoside³ that split upon being boiled with acids into chrysophanic acid and sugar, to which he gave the name "chrysophan." Dragendorff, subsequently, in analyzing five different commercial varieties of rhubarb,⁴ confirmed the observation of the author that chrysophanic acid occurs ready formed only in very small quantities in the root. According to this analysis it was present in appreciable quantity (1.01 per cent.) only in *Rheum sibiricum*, whilst in the other four commercial varieties (*Rheum Moscoviticum*, *R. Chinense*, *R. palmatum tanguticum*, and *R. Anglicum cultum*) either none or only traces could be detected. The method used by Dragendorff for the estimation of the chrysophanic acid consisted in extracting powdered rhubarb with light petroleum spirit, the petroleum being colored intensely yellow when the rhubarb under examination contained free chrysophanic acid, whilst in the opposite case it remained colorless.

The correctness of this method of testing may be verified by boiling powdered rhubarb in which no chrysophanic acid can be detected by

¹"Pharmaceutische Zeitschrift für Russland," xxiv, 193.

²"Liebig's Annalen," 1844, i, 215.

³"Pharm. Zeit. f. Russland," vi, 603.

⁴"Pharmaceutical Journal," [3], viii, 826.

means of petroleum spirit twice with 94 per cent. alcohol, and allowing the hot filtered liquor to evaporate spontaneously, when no chrysophanic acid, either in the crystalline or the amorphous condition will be found to separate. But if this experiment be varied, so that rhubarb powder, in which chrysophanic acid cannot be detected by the above method, be first macerated with water forty-eight hours, the residue filtered off and dried, and then shaken with petroleum spirit, the interesting observation will be made that the petroleum spirit immediately becomes intensely yellow. Further, if a rhubarb powder thus previously treated with water be boiled with alcohol, and the hot filtered extract allowed to evaporate spontaneously in a porcelain dish, a not inconsiderable quantity of chrysophanic acid will separate out, partially amorphous and part in a granular crystalline condition.

In illustration of this statement the following experiments may be quoted. They were made with two sorts of Chinese rhubarb which were supplied in 1878 and 1879 from the Crown warehouse in Warsaw to the hospitals of the Wilna military district (I and II), and with a crown rhubarb in powder, for which the author was indebted to Professor Trapp.

1. Estimation of moisture made between 100° and 105°C.

1·006 gram of No. I lost 0·073 gram = 7·26 per cent.

1·013 gram of No. II lost 0·077 gram = 7·70 per cent.

0·982 gram of No. III lost 0·079 gram = 8·04 per cent.

2. A gram of each kind was digested eight days with twelve grams of light petroleum spirit at the ordinary temperature, with agitation. In all these cases the supernatant liquid remained perfectly colorless, and upon evaporation not a trace of chrysophanic acid, but only a small quantity of a soft fatty mass, was left.

3. Each gram of rhubarb was placed with sixteen grams of 96° alcohol in a small retort provided with a return condenser, and maintained at the boiling temperature three minutes. The liquid was then filtered off, and the residual rhubarb heated to boiling with eight grams of fresh alcohol, the liquid again filtered off, and the united extracts left to evaporate spontaneously in a porcelain dish. In neither case was there a separation of a trace of chrysophanic acid.

4. One gram of No. I was macerated forty-eight hours with 20 cc. of distilled water, with agitation; after filtration the residue was worked upon the filter with 13 cc. of water, dried at about 30°C., and rubbed down in an agate mortar.

The powder thus obtained was then treated exactly as that in experiment 3; that is, boiled with alcohol and the extract allowed to evaporate at the ordinary temperature. Already, on the second day, a yellow granular precipitate had separated, partly upon the bottom and sides of the dish and partly as a yellow crystalline skin upon the surface of the liquid. On the third day, after the complete evaporation of the liquid, the yellowish residue in the dish was taken up with 10 grams of 40° spirit, filtered, the residue washed upon the filter with 6 grams of spirit of the same strength, but boiling, in order to remove impurities, such as phæoretin, erythretein and fat, and then the remainder, together with the filter, dried at between 100° and 105°C. The weight of the colored matter amounted to 0.0196 gram, which calculated upon the dried substance represented 2.12 per cent. It was of a golden yellow color, presented a granular crystallization, and separated readily from the filter after drying. It behaved towards reagents and solvents exactly like chrysophanic acid. Nevertheless, it still contained traces of emodin, which could be demonstrated in the following way. The colored matter was treated, as recommended by Rochleder, with boiling soda solution, in which chrysophanic acid is insoluble, the solution decomposed with hydrochloric acid, and the separated flocks collected upon a filter, washed, taken up in a little hot 94° alcohol and the solution left to evaporate to about one-third of its volume on a watch-glass. Yellow flocks were then found to have separated, which brought under the microscope by means of a glass rod proved to consist of agglomerations of needles grouped in a stellate arrangement round a generally darker cellular-formed nucleus.

1.0236 gram of rhubarb No. II, treated in exactly the same way as in the previous experiment, No. 4, gave 0.098 gram of chrysophanic acid = 2.09 per cent. of coloring matter in the dried substance.

1.0174 gram of rhubarb No. III gave 0.0194 gram of chrysophanic acid = 2.07 per cent. in the dried substance. In the coloring matters prepared from Nos. II and III also distinct traces of emodin could be detected.

5. 1.0236 of rhubarb No. II, treated exactly as in experiment 4, only with the difference that instead of forty-eight hours it was macerated with water twenty-four hours, gave 0.021 gram of coloring matter = 2.21 per cent. in the dried substance.

It will be seen that this yield was somewhat larger than that from

the same kind of rhubarb root after forty-eight hours' maceration in water (experiment 4). But whilst the colored matter obtained in experiment 4 was, after drying, of a golden yellow color, showed a granular crystalline condition and separated readily from the filter, that obtained in this subsequent experiment had, after drying, a more dirty yellow color, adhered closely to the filter and the horny crystalline form was less pronounced.

In this case a small quantity of amorphous substance still clung to the coloring matter, due probably to the shorter duration of the maceration of the rhubarb powder with water.

6. 1.037 gram of rhubarb No. III was treated with water as in experiment 4, and then upon the dried residual rhubarb was poured 12 grams of light petroleum spirit, which upon being shaken was immediately colored intensely yellow. After eight days' maceration the liquid was filtered off, more petroleum spirit passed through the rhubarb on the filter and the filtrate evaporated. The residue, dried at between 100° and 105°C. , amounted to 0.013 gram = 1.36 per cent. of dried substance; it consisted of chrysophanic acid and fat.

It will be seen that here the yield was considerably smaller than by the process followed in experiment 4, and this is explained by the fact that chrysophanic acid is only soluble to a small extent in light petroleum spirit, so that an eight days' maceration of the root with twelve times its weight of light petroleum spirit only partially exhausted it. When the residual rhubarb from this experiment was treated with a second quantity of petroleum spirit, the latter after a time acquired a strong yellow color. Light petroleum spirit would seem, therefore, to be better adapted for the qualitative than for the quantitative determination of chrysophanic acid in rhubarb.

The foregoing experiments make us acquainted with the interesting fact that chrysophanic acid is first formed in rhubarb root upon digestion of the latter with water; and that therefore little or none of this acid exists preformed in the more important kinds of rhubarb. The formation of chrysophanic acid is due without doubt to its splitting off from the mother substance, chrysophan, effected probably by a ferment-like body, which is soluble in water, but not soluble in alcohol; it is for this reason that an alcoholic extract of the root can be evaporated without decomposition, because while chrysophan will be contained in it the body causing the fermentation will not. In this way also it is explained sufficiently for present purposes how an

extract of rhubarb prepared with dilute spirit—for instance, tincture of rhubarb—will deposit from time to time a precipitate, which according to Clarke consists chiefly of chrysophanic acid. In such an extract there is, besides the chrysophan of the root, a part also of the body capable of acting upon it as a ferment. The breaking up of the glucoside is therefore only imperfectly and gradually effected.

In a watery extract of rhubarb—and consequently in all the official extracts prepared by macerating the root with water—it would appear from the foregoing experiments that only a little chrysophan can be expected, because under such conditions the glucoside undergoes decomposition. This agrees with the experience of the author in a previous investigation, when he obtained not more than 0.6 or 0.7 gram of chrysophan from 420 grams of “crown” or good Chinese rhubarb. On the other hand, all the separated chrysophanic acid will be found after the maceration in the residual marc; the residue after the preparation of *extractum rhei* could therefore be profitably used as a source of pure chrysophanic acid, as the article appearing in commerce is not generally pure. For this purpose the dried and powdered marc should be heated to boiling with three times its weight of alcohol of at least 90° Tr., in a retort provided with a return condenser, the temperature maintained five minutes, the liquor filtered, the residue boiled a second time with one-and-a-half times its weight of alcohol, again filtered, and the united filtrates allowed to stand twenty-four hours in the cold in a stoppered vessel. A large portion of the chrysophanic acid will separate in a granular crystalline condition. If the supernatant liquid be decanted, the alcohol distilled off and the residue treated with dilute alcohol (40° to 50° Tr.), in which chrysophanic acid is insoluble, a further quantity of coloring matter may be obtained.

According to recent observations, chrysophanic acid possesses strongly antiseptic properties, to which rhubarb doubtless owes its beneficial action in catarrh of the stomach, indigestion, etc. These properties belong to chrysophan also, but to a more intense degree; because it may be expected that when it reaches the stomach chrysophanic acid is at once split off and is thus brought into action in a nascent condition. It would seem therefore desirable that in the official preparations this substance pertaining to the active constituents of rhubarb root should be present in its integrity. As has been shown, in many preparations of rhubarb little or no chrysophan is to

be expected, because the existing formulæ do not take into account the chemical properties of this compound. In a future communication, which will deal, among other things, with the purgative principle of rhubarb, the author proposes to submit some formulæ for such preparations.—*Phar. Jour. and Trans.*, July 18, 1885, p. 65.

REPORT ON PRESSED ERGOT.¹

BY JOHN MOSS, F.I.C., F.C.S.

On Wednesday, August 14, 1878, a "Note on an Improved Preparation of Ergot" was read by Mr. A. W. Postans, F.C.S., at a meeting of the British Pharmaceutical Conference, held in Dublin. (See "*Amer. Jour. Phar.*," 1878, p. 581.) In the discussion which followed, Mr. T. B. Groves, of Weymouth, a pharmacist of wide experience and fertile in expedient, suggested that ergot itself might keep better if it were first ground and then compressed. The suggestion struck me as being a very valuable one, for strong hydraulic pressure would remove a considerable portion of the fixed oil, which I believe has an attraction for the insects which prey upon ergot, and the solid compressed form would offer so much less extent of surface than the ordinary drug that it might reasonably be expected to be less affected by atmospheric influences. The experiment was accordingly tried in February, 1879, on 7 lbs. of ordinary commercial ergot, which was ground and then subjected in three separate lots to a pressure of 2½ tons to the square inch. Fourteen ounces of fixed oil (12·5 per cent.) were obtained, and three cakes, each about 8 inches square. Mr. Groves took charge of half of one of these cakes, and Mr. Holmes placed the other half in the Museum at Bloomsbury Square. Mr. Groves placed his specimen in a storeroom, where, as he informs me in a letter dated July 17, 1885, it lay on a shelf "without any special care being given to it. To-day it looks as good as ever; I send you a bit to see. But the question is, how about its potency; does it retain its medicinal activity?" This was the crucial question, and to decide it I obtained from Mr. Groves more of the cake and made a fluid extract, proceeding as the British Pharmacopœia directs, except that the ether treatment was omitted. There is a specimen of the cake on the table. In color it strongly resembles linseed cake, but the grain is

¹ Read before the British Pharmaceutical Conference.

much finer. It has the characteristic smell of ergot, and certainly seems no worse for age. Another specimen of the cake, kindly sent me by Mr. Holmes from the Museum, had when received a stronger smell and appeared to be not quite so dry. It had been kept in a bottle and evidently sweated there. Neither specimen showed signs of insect life, but of the two modes of keeping, to let it lie in paper seems the best. The cake readily breaks down with hot water and absorbs three or four times its own weight. It is convenient also for disintegration by a grater, should it be desired to administer the powder.

Oil in Pressed Ergot.—It may be convenient to mention here that in order to reply to questions which were put when the pressed cake was first exhibited at Bloomsbury Square in 1879, the oil was extracted by ether from 100 grains of it reduced to powder, and when dried was found to weigh 13·7 grains; this with the 12·5 grains removed by pressure makes 26·2 per cent, and what was absorbed by the pressing cloths will make up the oil to the normal quantity present in ergot, about 30 per cent. By operating with special appliances, such as are used by oil pressers, more oil could be removed from the cake than my experiments show, and, working on a larger scale, the proportion absorbed by the cloths would be smaller.

Liquid Extract.—In order that the liquid extract from pressed ergot might compare on all fours with the ordinary preparation, the increased richness of the cake, as compared with ergot, from removal of inert oil by pressure and loss of moisture by long exposure in a dry warehouse, must be taken into account. No actual observation of the original weight of the cake would appear to have been made, but an estimated loss of 6 per cent. for moisture, *plus* 16 per cent. of oil ascertained, will not unduly favor the cake. Working on this basis, half a pound of pressed ergot was used to make 10½ fluidounces of liquid extract. A specimen of this is on the table, and on examination it will be perceived that it has the characteristic odor and taste of ergot in a greatly modified degree. It is also paler and has not the body of the extract as ordinarily prepared. This is no doubt due in part to extractive being carried away in the oil during pressing, and possibly also partly due to long exposure having rendered some extractive insoluble. Be that as it may, it may in a measure account for the preference which patients give it over ordinary extract as intimated below.

Potency.—The liquid extract was placed in the hands of my friend,

Mr. M. G. Biggs, M.R.C.S., of Wandsworth, the nature of whose practice affords him abundant opportunity for watching the effects of ergot. I append the result of his trials in his own words:

"Report on Action of Liquid Extract of Ergot."

"The liquid extract of ergot supplied by Mr. Moss was used in three cases of confinement. All had had children previously; in the first case, after the birth of the child and detachment of the placenta there was a tendency to flooding owing to inertia of the uterus; in about fifteen or twenty minutes pains came on, the uterus contracted, and hæmorrhage ceased, the contraction remaining permanent; there were no after pains, although after each previous delivery these had been very bad. This I have sometimes found before as a result of administering ergot, and therefore regard it as an extra proof of perfect action. The other two cases were simply suffering from inertia, pains were weak and threatened cessation; in each case the liquid extract was used, and with apparently the usual results. Neither of these cases was, however, to be relied on fully, as pains might have come on naturally. The last case in which I used it, however, was an almost perfect physiological experiment.

"It was a case of miscarriage at the third month. When I arrived the patient had lost a large amount of blood, and was having labor pains rather severely; the ovum, however, was projecting slightly from a partially dilated os, the vagina was plugged, and the hæmorrhage and pain ceased. The next evening on removing the plug things were *in statu quo*. I gave a dose of the liquid extract (one drachm) and plugged again. Shortly after pains again came on, but did not last long. The next day two other doses were given of the same strength, and each time pains came on and lasted some time, and on removing the second plug the os, which had before been partly opened, was now firmly closed. The case is still proceeding, but there could be no clearer proof of the action of the liquid extract than the cessation of pains altogether, unless shortly after a dose of ergot, and the recurrence of these phenomena after each separate dose.

"Mr. Webb, my assistant, has also used the liquid extract, and he is convinced that it is perfectly active, and says the patients prefer it to other kinds; in his estimation it is an elegant preparation."

From these observations it appears conclusive that pressed ergot retains full potency after six and a half years, and that no special care is necessary to preserve it from insect attacks or from climatic influences which are adverse to the ordinary drug.

I beg to express my thanks to Mr. Biggs for the prompt and effective assistance which has given point to this short report.—*Phar. Jour. Trans.*, Sept. 26, 1885, p. 274.

QUININE LACTATE, dissolved in four parts of water, is recommended by Vigier for hypodermic use. The salt is rich in alkaloid, has a neutral reaction, and its injection does not produce pain or inflammation.—*Gaz. Hebdom.*

ON THE EXTRACTION OF THE ALKALOIDS FROM
CINCHONA BARK BY DILUTE ACIDS.

BY DR. J. E. DE VRIJ, C.I.E.

*Reprint from the "Chemist and Druggist," August 15, 1885, communicated
by the Author.*

Many years' experience has taught me that *all* the alkaloids contained in cinchona bark can be completely extracted by treating the bark in fine powder with hydrochloric, nitric, or phosphoric acid, but that extraction cannot be completely effected by sulphuric acid. This has been disputed by some chemists, and by no one more strongly than by Dr. B. Paul, who stated at the evening meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society, held on December 3, 1884, as the result of recent investigations on various succirubra barks, that they retained nearly 50 per cent. of their alkaloids after extraction by hydrochloric acid.¹ But since, as I showed some years ago,² 40 per cent. of the alkaloids present in cinchona bark may be extracted by cold water alone, Dr. Paul's statement will appear on the face of it extremely improbable. I have, nevertheless, been induced to make a new and accurate investigation of this matter, thus late in my career, by the fact that other chemists have also obtained unsatisfactory results in attempting to extract the alkaloids of cinchona bark by dilute hydrochloric acid.

When I published, some years ago,³ my process for the preparation of ext. cinchonæ liq., in which two molecules of HCl are used for each molecule of total alkaloids, I pointed out that a material quantity of alkaloid, amounting to about 20 per cent. of the whole was left behind in the bark. It follows, therefore, that if—as I hope to show—the extraction of the whole of the alkaloids by dilute HCl is possible, more than two molecules of the acid must be used. The explanation of this is that the alkaloids do not exist in the bark in the *free* state, but in combination with quinic, quinovic, and more largely with cinchotannic acid. When also it is remembered that the amount of the latter (cinchotannic acid) is often very considerable, reaching, as I have recently observed in a bark of cinchona officinalis, to more than 12 per cent., as against 6.72 per cent. of alkaloids, and when we

¹"Pharmaceutical Journal," December 6, 1884.

²"Haaxman's Tydschrift der Pharmacie," 1879, p. 258.

³"Haaxman's Tydschrift der Pharmacie," 1880, p. 5.

consider the influence of *quantity* in chemical reactions (l'influence des masses), as propounded by Berthollet in his "Statique Chimique," the necessity for a preponderating quantity of acid will require no further demonstration.

A series of observations on bark of *C. officinalis* and *succirubra* showed that four molecules of HCl (4×36.5) sufficed for one molecule of total alkaloids, of which the molecular weight may be taken to be 310. Supposing, therefore, that the total alkaloids of the bark to be operated upon do not exceed 10 per cent., 17 grammes of strong HCl , containing 30 per cent. of real HCl , will be sufficient for the complete extraction of 100 grammes of finely-powdered bark. More acid must be used in those rare cases in which the alkaloids exceed 10 per cent.

The method of applying the quantity of acid thus determined is also important to the success of the operation. The acid should be mixed with a portion of water equal to the quantity of bark, and the bark should then be added so as to form a thick paste, which is to be left for some hours. More water is then stirred in until the whole is sufficiently fluid to pour freely. Much foam is formed at this stage, and it is necessary to postpone the next operation until the foam has entirely disappeared. Percolation is then effected in a cylindrical glass tube with constricted exit, which is closed by a loose plug of "charpie."¹ As soon as the percolate begins to run clear it is collected, percolation being kept up by pouring on distilled water until excess of caustic soda ceases to produce a precipitate in the passing percolate.

I must now allude to two matters, one of which has been publicly advanced as an objection to the above process, whilst the other has been communicated to me privately.

1. It has been objected that after the percolate, as above, has ceased to be acted upon by caustic soda, the addition of the well-known reagent iodide of mercury and potassium shows a distinct alkaloidal reaction, and percolation must be carried much farther before this reaction ceases. Although not myself attaching importance to this objection, I have thought it right to ascertain by actual experiment

¹"Charpie" is the French name for threads of old linen. Upon this apparently insignificant agent the success of the operation largely depends, whether it shall be completed in a few hours, or whether it may be prolonged for days.

how far it affects the accuracy of the process. Twenty grammes of succirubra bark were therefore treated in the manner described, until 180 cc. of percolate had been recovered, when caustic soda ceased to produce precipitation. The percolation was then resumed until further 950 cc. had been recovered, and the reaction with HgI, KaI had also ceased. To this second portion (950 cc.) a sufficient quantity of the mercuric reagent was added, and the liquor was allowed to settle for some days, when the clear supernatant was decanted, and the precipitate was carefully collected on a filter. It was found that while the first portion of the percolate, 180 cc., yielded 1.42 gramme of alkaloids, the second portion yielded only 0.031 gramme of the compound of alkaloids with iodide of mercury, corresponding to less than 0.015 gramme alkaloids. This inaccuracy, amounting to no more than 1 per cent. of the alkaloid present in the bark, is so small that it may, I think, be disregarded.

2. It has been remarked that the percolate, after running clear for a considerable quantity, presently becomes turbid. I have also sometimes met with this inconvenience, which I attributed some years ago to the behavior of cinchotannic acid under certain conditions. In analyzing 20 grammes of a sample of *C. officinalis*, which proved to be very rich in cinchotannic acid, I observed that after 97 cc. of perfectly clear percolate had been recovered, the succeeding drops caused a slight turbidity in the previously clear liquor. The percolate was therefore separated at this point into two portions. While remaining apart both were perfectly clear, but when mixed together a very turbid mixture resulted. The explanation is simple. Cinchotannic acid is freely soluble in water, but scarcely soluble at all in acids. The earlier percolate, containing much hydrochloric acid, dissolved but little cinchotannic acid; the later percolate, being almost free from acid, dissolved much cinchotannic acid, which was again thrown out of solution when brought into contact with the previously collected acid percolate.¹

Although the whole of the alkaloids may be extracted from cinchona bark either by hydrochloric, phosphoric, or nitric acids, used

¹The above observations may be further verified thus: Let 1 part *Indian* cinchona bark of any species be percolated with 4 parts water. To the clear percolate add excess of HCl , and an abundant precipitate of cinchotannic acid will be produced. *American* calisaya bark, on the contrary, shows no such reaction, in consequence of its small amount of cinchotannic acid.

in proportions equivalent to those quoted above, a slight difference will be observed in the results obtained when nitric acid is employed, the amount of alkaloid being less by a few centigrammes than that obtained by hydrochloric acid. The latter acid dissolves a colored substance contained in cinchona bark, which is not alkaloid, but which behaves towards hydrochloric acid as if it were so. This substance is not soluble in nitric acid. If, therefore, the total alkaloids extracted by hydrochloric acid are afterwards treated with dilute nitric acid, the whole of the *alkaloids* will be redissolved, leaving a very small quantity of brownish matter unacted upon. I believe the behaviour of this brown residue to be one of the causes of discrepancy in analyses of bark performed by different methods.

To show that cinchona bark cannot be completely exhausted of its alkaloids by dilute sulphuric acid, 20 grammes of powdered bark (ascertained to contain 6.72 per cent. of total alkaloids by the hydrochloric-acid process above described) were treated with an equivalent quantity of sulphuric acid employed in the same manner. The first percolate (100 cc.) was of a much paler color than that obtained by hydrochloric acid; it was rendered only slightly turbid by caustic soda, or by HgI , KaI , and was only slightly reddened by the former. The percolation was continued until 677 cc. had been recovered. This large volume (more than thirty-three times the weight of the bark) yielded only 0.807 gramme, or 4.035 per cent. of alkaloid. Percolation was therefore resumed until a further 800 cc. were recovered, which yielded 0.063 gramme alkaloids. The total results from 1,477 cc. percolate (more than 70 volumes) was therefore only $0.807 + 0.063 = 0.87$ gramme, or 4.35 per cent., from a bark known to contain 6.72 per cent. From this it must be concluded that sulphuric acid is practically incapable of extracting the whole of the alkaloids of cinchona bark.

Before proceeding to speak of the practical application of the above process, I may explain why I have always insisted upon the use of *cold* dilute acids in operating upon cinchona bark.

If bark powder, which has been completely exhausted of its alkaloids by cold hydrochloric acid, be heated to ebullition with more dilute HCl , and the liquid after being strained be accurately saturated by caustic soda, a voluminous red precipitate is formed resembling the so-called pectic substances described by Fremy, but containing not a trace of alkaloid. The intrusion of this matter makes the extraction

of the alkaloids at a high temperature much more difficult, and is unattended with any advantages.

I have been thus minute in discussing the treatment of cinchona bark by dilute acids for two reasons, viz:

1. Because the extraction of the alkaloids from bark by hydrochloric acid has been extensively practiced in Bengal since 1872 in the manufacture of the well-known cinchona febrifuge (sometimes called "Indian quinine"), and the process, which was adopted on my recommendation to the Secretary of State for India, has been condemned as *wasteful* by the editor of the "Pharmaceutical Journal."¹

2. Because, as an old pharmacist, I wish all pharmacists to examine for themselves the quality of the cinchona bark that they use, and I consider the hydrochloric-acid process by far the most suitable for pharmaceutical uses. It is simple, inexpensive, thoroughly reliable, and practically (if not scientifically) accurate. It is also capable of indicating not only the percentage of alkaloids, but also the proportion of cinchotannic acid, which is of no small importance from a therapeutical point of view.

The following directions will enable pharmacists to obtain satisfactory results with facility:

Mode of Analyzing Cinchona Bark by Hydrochloric Acid.

Twenty grammes of finely-powdered bark are treated with hydrochloric acid and water as above described, whereby *all* the alkaloids are dissolved. The quantity of percolate which it is necessary to pass through the marc is usually from 180 cc. to 200 cc., which quantity will rarely be exceeded if the percolation has been successfully conducted. The estimation of the amount of alkaloids in this acid solution may be made in either of the following ways, viz:

1. The acid solution is precipitated by a *large excess* of caustic soda, which throws down a curd-like *white* precipitate. The precipitate is collected on a double filter,² and washed until the filtrate is nearly colorless. The whole of the filtrate is measured, and compensation made by adding to the weight of alkaloid, to be presently ascertained, 0.0585 gramme for every 100 cc. of the mother-liquor at temperature 15°C. The drained filter is carefully dried upon blotting-paper until the precipitate ceases to adhere, when it may be easily detached

¹ "Pharmaceutical Journal," September 13, 1884, p. 205.

² Doubling the filter facilitates the filtration.

without loss, and transferred to a small tared dish. It is now dried over a water-bath until it ceases to lose weight, and the weight is ascertained. Add the compensation above indicated for mother-liquor, multiply the sum by five, and the product is the percentage of alkaloids in the bark under examination.

The alkaline mother-liquor may now be used for ascertaining indirectly the percentage of cinchotannic acid. After exposure for two or three days in a shallow dish, by which the cinchotannic acid becomes converted into cinchona red,¹ the liquid is heated, and hydrochloric acid cautiously added to slight acid reaction. After cooling, the now turbid liquor is filtered through a double filter to collect the very voluminous precipitate of cinchona red. The precipitate is washed, dried, and weighed, the second filter being used as a tare.² By multiplying the ascertained weight of cinchona red by 1.2, a close approximation to the weight of cinchotannic acid is obtained, from which its percentage may be calculated, and it will be seen that the quantity of cinchotannic acid in different species of cinchona, and even in different samples of the same species, varies considerably.

2. The acid solution is mixed with excess of caustic soda as before, and well shaken in a bottle with 1 litre of commercial benzol, and left standing for not more than five minutes, for the benzol, which now contains the alkaloids in solution, to separate.³ The benzol solution is now decanted on a filter previously moistened with benzol, and the remainder is poured into a separating funnel. After sufficient time for separation, the red alkaline liquor is drawn off into the bottle previously used, and shaken with other 200 cc. benzol to remove possible traces of alkaloid, and this benzolic solution is also filtered and added to the former. The amount of alkaloids contained in the

¹ If the dark-red alkaline liquor becomes turbid during exposure to air the quantity of caustic soda is insufficient for solution of the newly formed cinchona red, and more soda must be added.

² Although I am opposed to drying precipitates upon the filter, it is unavoidable in this case, because the moist cinchona red cannot be conveniently removed.

³ A litre of benzol (boiling at from 85° to 120°C.) dissolves all the alkaloids of 20 grammes bark. By long standing, however, a slight separation of crystallized benzoate of alkaloid, chiefly cinchonine, may sometimes take place and affect the accuracy of the result. I, therefore, recommend that it should not be allowed to stand for more than 5 minutes. The benzol may be used repeatedly, without redistillation, and with but little loss.

mixed benzolic solutions may now be determined either directly or indirectly in the manner following, viz.:

Direct Determination.

The benzolic solution is shaken with 30 cc. very dilute nitric acid, the acid solution is drawn off and replaced by 20 cc. water, which is again shaken and added to the first. The liquors are heated to drive off traces of benzol, and when cool transferred to a separator and shaken with 200 cc. ether, and an excess of caustic soda. In this way *all* the alkaloids are dissolved by the ether,¹ leaving generally a slight brown film on the surface of the alkaline liquor, *which is almost entirely soluble in chloroform.*² After separating the ethereal solution a further 100 cc. ether is shaken with the alkaline liquor, and is then added to the first. By distillation of the ether, the whole of the alkaloids are left in a state of greater purity than I have ever obtained them by any other process.

Indirect Determination.

The benzolic solution is well shaken with 70 cc. deci-normal sulphuric acid. The acid solution is drawn off and replaced by 30 cc. water, which is again shaken and added to the other. The aqueous liquors are heated, and *accurately* neutralized by deci-normal solution of caustic soda until the color of reddened litmus is affected by it. The quantity of soda solution required for saturation is now to be deducted from 70 cc. (the equivalent of 70 cc. deci-normal sulphuric acid), and the difference multiplied by $\cdot 031^3$ is the weight of alkaloid

¹ Whilst preparing this paper I found that the succirubra bark used in Bengal for the manufacture of cinchona febrifuge proved an exception to this rule; for, although the whole of the alkaloids are at first dissolved by the ether, a separation of small crystals of cinchonine quickly followed to the extent of 0.17 gramme. I attribute this to the large proportion of cinchonine contained in this bark, which I have found to amount to as much as 49.3 per cent. of the total alkaloids.

² This brown substance, *which is not alkaloid*, is the reason why analyses of bark, in which chloroform is the solvent, yield an apparent higher percentage of alkaloids.

³ 0.031 gramme is the weight of alkaloid corresponding to 1 cc. of a deci-normal solution. The molecular weight of the mixed alkaloids of cinchona bark being, as previously stated, 310.

in 20 grammes bark. This product multiplied by 5 gives the percentage.

Example.—Suppose the bark for analysis to contain 5 per cent. alkaloid—which would be a reasonable standard for pharmaceutical purposes—the acid solution from 20 grammes powder should be neutralized by, say, 37.5 cc. soda solution :

For $70 - 37.5 \times .031 \times 5 = 5.04$

(the number of grammes of alkaloid in 100 grammes bark).

I consider this indirect determination the most simple for those who are accustomed to work volumetric processes.

In concluding this paper it is satisfactory to me to be able to state that another chemist, very experienced in the analysis of cinchona bark, confirms the practicability of extracting the whole of the alkaloids by hydrochloric acid as effectually as by any other process. Mr. A. Kissel, chemical assistant to Dr. G. Kerner, in Zimmer's quinine manufactory, has kindly sent me the following results of analyses performed by him on the same bark powder by the several processes indicated, viz. :

	Lime and alcohol Process.	Lime and Oil Process.	Hydrochloric Acid Process.
Quinine.....	1.805	1.798	1.802
Quinidine.....	0.358	0.347	0.351
Cinchonidine.....	0.338	0.343	0.335
Amorphous.....	1.873	1.867	1.874
Total.....	4.374	4.355	4.362

I therefore consider that the extraction of alkaloids from cinchona bark by hydrochloric acid, as applied to the manufacture of the cinchona febrifuge in Bengal, provided it is properly performed, is not a wasteful, but, on the contrary, an economic and efficient process. It is, moreover (with the exception of an unpublished process, the private property of my friend, Dr. G. Kerner, which I am not at liberty to make known), the only process that can be profitably applied in the tropics to the manufacture of the total cinchona alkaloids.

VARIETIES.

STROPHANTIN was isolated by Hardy and Gallois, from the seeds of a species of *Strophantus*, an apocynaceous woody climber, used in preparing the arrow-poison *incé*. The principle forms colorless neutral crystals, is soluble in alcohol and water, and was ascertained to be a heart poison. Experiments made with it in Edinburgh, show it to be physiologically allied to digitalin; it has been used hypodermically in doses of $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ grain.

ESTIMATION OF QUININE IN MIXTURES OF QUININE-ALKALOIDS. By Y. Shimoyama.—The method described is founded on the relative solubilities of the oxalates of the quinine alkaloids: Quinine oxalate dissolves in 1,446 parts of water at 18°; cinchonidine oxalate in 228 parts at 15°; quinidine oxalate in 151 parts at 15°, and cinchonine oxalate in 104 parts at 10°. The precipitation is effected by adding sodium oxalate to a dilute neutral solution of the alkaloids, and correction must be made for the amount of quinine oxalate remaining in solution.—*Jour. Chem. Soc.*, Aug., 1885, p. 935; *Arch. Pharm.* [3], [23], 209-229.

MINUTES OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL MEETING.

PHILADELPHIA, November 17, 1885.

On motion of Prof. Trimble, Mr. Wm. B. Thompson was called to the chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were read, and, there being no objection, they stand approved.

The Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1883 was presented to the meeting, it having been received in the recess of the summer season, and not brought to the notice of the last meeting; it was accepted with thanks.

The Actuary read a paper upon *pill excipients*, and reactions which had been noticed in certain chemicals frequently prescribed in pillular form. The reading of the paper gave rise to an interesting discussion, in which Prof. Maisch, Mr. Lowe, Prof. Trimble, Mr. Thompson and the writer took part.

Mr. Thompson stated that a valuable lesson was to be drawn from the paper and the discussion, which was that pills should not be made with any excipient which merely suited the convenience of the dispenser, or served the purpose of causing the material to cohere into a mass that could be readily dispensed, but that each and every case must be decided by enlightened, thoughtful judgment; further, that it was a consideration what became of the immense quantities of wholesale-made goods that were annually disposed of in commerce.

Prof. Maisch stated that many years ago he had tried to find a suitable excipient for calomel pills, to be kept in stock, and his experience was then that it was best to make enough pills only for a few days' supply.

The use of extract of gentian was also discussed in its connection with the preparation of pills, and its promiscuous use objected to, both for chemical and therapeutical reasons. The paper was referred to the Publication Committee.

Prof. Maisch read a paper upon an indigenous *species of croton* received from Georgia, and showed under the microscope the stellate glandular scales from the leaves, branches, and from the silver-white flowers. The paper was referred to the Publication Committee, and the specimen donated to the cabinet.

A cabinet of botanical materia medica specimens, designed for the use of pharmaceutical students, was exhibited; it is put up by Parke Davis & Co., of Detroit, and contains 288 different drugs, packed in turned wooden boxes. Each box is numbered, and the catalogue accompanying the set gives the appropriate name, with its corresponding number.

Prof. Maisch stated that he was glad that such a cabinet, at a moderate price, was now accessible to students, many of whom had little opportunity in the stores of their employers of seeing all or most officinal drugs in their natural condition. In reply to a criticism that the odor of the wooden boxes in which the specimens are packed gave an odor to some of the drugs that is unnatural to them, Prof. M. stated that this taught the lesson to refrain from judging exclusively or mainly by the odor or taste, and to rely more upon the internal structure and characteristic growth.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

THOS. S. WIEGAND, *Registrar.*

PHARMACEUTICAL COLLEGES AND ASSOCIATIONS.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY.—At the first social meeting, held Oct. 13th, Prof. Risley delivered a lecture on hyoscyamus, belladonna, and allied mydriatics, including also the alkaloids atropine, duboisine, hyoscyamine, homatropine, cocaine and others.

At the second social meeting, held Nov. 10th, Prof. Woodbury gave a lecture on the relations existing between practical medicine and pharmacy, and the debt which medical science owes to pharmacy.

WESTERN ALUMNI OF THE PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY.—In response to a generally expressed desire of the many graduates of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy residing in the Western and Middle States, an informal meeting was held November 22d, in Chicago, to discuss the formation of a Western Alumni Association. There were present Albert E. Ebert, Henry C. C. Maisch, Edward A. Mannheimer, Carl S. Haliberg, Andrew J. H. McGuire, Chas. L. Feldkamp, and others, all residents of Chicago. It was stated that there were nearly fifty graduates of the College in Chicago and its immediate vicinity alone, while in the surrounding States the number would reach in the hundreds. It was the sense of the meeting that an organization through which an annual reunion could be held in Chicago about Commencement time (commencing next year, 1886), would be very desirable, and would keep alive the pleasant recollections of the Alma Mater with the older graduates, besides being of interest and profit to those who come westward after leaving the College.

It is not intended that this Association shall encroach in any manner upon the regular Alumni Association of the College, but simply to give all its graduates residing west of the Alleghanies, whether members of the Philadelphia Alumni Association or not, an opportunity of meeting socially once a year. To all graduates residing in the States of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin a cordial invitation is extended to participate.

Another meeting will be held in Chicago shortly to make preliminary arrangements, and the Secretary will give any information to those desiring to join. Let there be a generous response.

CHARLES L. FELDKAMP, *Secretary.*

56 Beethoven Place, Chicago, Nov. 23, 1885.

THE CALIFORNIA PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY held its annual meeting in San Francisco, Nov. 12th. The Society has 144 active, five life and one honorary member. The receipts during the past year amounted to \$2,371.80; the disbursements were \$2,270.78; leaving a balance of \$101.02 in the treasury. A number of new members were elected. The Executive Officers for the ensuing year are: President, M. M. Searby; Vice-Presidents, Prof. H. Behr and Prof. Fred. Grazer; Corresponding and Financial Secretary, Chas. Troppmann; Treasurer, E. A. Schreck; Librarian and Curator, Dr. A. L. Scholl; Editor, Prof. W. T. Wenzell.

The Secretary is desirous to open correspondence with all pharmaceutical Societies in the United States for the interchange of opinions.

THE ILLINOIS PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION held its sixth annual meeting in Chicago, commencing Sept. 22d. Besides the address of the President and the reports of officers, reports on trade interests, on the pharmacy law, on drug adulterations, on non-official remedies, and on kindred subjects were received and fully discussed. Mr. T. H. Patterson, Chicago, was elected President for the ensuing year; Mr. T. N. Jamieson, Chicago, Secretary, and Mr. B. F. Gardner, Treasurer. The Association adjourned to meet in Rockford on the first Tuesday in June, 1886.

REVIEWS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

A Textbook of Pharmacology, Therapeutics and Materia Medica. By T. Lauder Brunton, M.D., D.Sc., etc. Adapted to the United States Pharmacopœia by Francis H. Williams, M.D., Boston, Mass. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1885. 8vo, pp. 1035. Price, cloth \$5.50, leather \$6.50.

After a brief introduction, explanatory of the various subdivisions of the science of materia medica, the opening section treats of general pathology and therapeutics, explaining in a general way the manner in which drugs act upon different animals, the various organs and the secretions, the modifications in the effects under various conditions, the methods of administration, and the antidotes. The discussion of these subjects is particularly

adapted for the use of medical students, and while the details are comparatively brief, everything that seems to be of importance is treated with clearness, and when necessary explained by means of illustrations. The second section on Pharmacy gives brief explanations of the different groups of galenical preparations and lists of those recognized by the British and U. S. Pharmacopœias, with their doses. The following four sections, about 500 pages, treat of the medicinal agents, beginning with the elements and their inorganic compounds, which are followed by the organic compounds, excluding the active principles, these being considered in connection with the drugs from which they are derived. The vegetable and animal drugs are arranged in the natural orders of the plants and animals yielding them. For each drug the official name or names of the two pharmacopœias are given, explanations of the parts used, the habitat of the plant, brief characteristics of the drug, the official preparations with their doses, and an enumeration of the constituents. The physiological action, therapeutical uses, modes of administration, combination with other drugs, doses, antidotes and similar subjects of importance to physicians are discussed more in detail, in accordance with the scope of the work, which is intended as a textbook for the medical student, and to serve also as a book of reference in a condensed form. A limited number of the more important non-pharmacopœial drugs, like coto, quebracho, condurango, cheken, papayotin and others are considered in a similar manner. Besides the general index referring to the drugs and their effects, an index of diseases and remedies has been added, and a bibliographical index, which refers to the more important works and essays on the action and uses of the different remedies.

The work is doubtless a useful one. It contains nearly 200 illustrations, and that the general make-up is unexceptionable need merely be mentioned.

A complete pronouncing Medical Dictionary: embracing the terminology of medicine and the kindred sciences, with their signification, etymology and pronunciation. With an appendix comprising an explanation of the Latin terms and phrases occurring in medicine, anatomy, pharmacy, etc.; together with the necessary directions for writing Latin prescriptions, etc., etc. By Joseph Thomas, M.D., LL.D., etc. On the basis of Thomas's comprehensive pronouncing medical dictionary. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1885. 8vo, pp. 844.

A work from the pen of the distinguished author, based upon a previous one, which has been received with merited commendation, may be expected to present characteristics which entitle it to special attention. In the first place should be mentioned its extent; scarcely a technical term or a scientific name used in medicine, pharmacy, and in medical chemistry and botany, has been overlooked, and all are explained as to their derivation and meaning, the correct pronunciation being indicated by an equivalent English spelling, if necessary, or more frequently by dividing the words into syllables, and in connection with accentuation marks and with signs indicating the proper sounds of the vowels and of some of the consonants. The names of a large number of natural orders, of genera and of species of

plants have been admitted, which have attracted more or less attention as remedies, or which are cultivated for ornament; usually the common name of the plant is also given, in addition to its habitat, the part used and the medical properties, thus affording concise references which will often prove quite convenient. Considering the multitude of plants which enjoy a local or more extended reputation, it is not to be expected that the names of all should have found a place here; indeed, omissions may usually be pointed out in works devoted especially to medical botany, and it is therefore no fault that occasionally the name of an American plant like *Mahonia* is not found, while others which are now rarely met with in medical or pharmaceutical literature have their allotted place. In very rare cases only, as far as we have examined the text, could we wish for corrections or for more exact explanations; thus on page 198 *Dryobalanops camphora* is said to be "the tree which affords camphor in greatest quantity," and on page 750 triticein is stated to be "the gluten of wheat." That the names of all drugs, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, recognized by the present or former Pharmacopœia are mentioned and explained with reference to the authority, falls very properly within the scope of the work, but we doubt the utility of giving working formulas for tinctures, troches and the like; it seems to us that for a pronouncing dictionary simple explanations are quite appropriate and sufficient, such as have been made use of for most of the extracts and fluid extracts. For example: *Extract. Colocynth. comp.* is defined to be "a preparation containing colocynth, aloes, cardamom and scammony" (and soap might have been added); *Extract. Gentianæ*, "an aqueous extract of gentian;" *Extr. Valer. fluid.*, "a fluid extract of valerian, one cubic centimetre representing one gramme of valerian;" the processes have been very properly omitted in these cases.

For some years past the word *official* has been used by some authors to denote such articles which are recognized by the pharmacopœias. Dr. Thomas, in not admitting this word, seems to consider the above application as being improper, with which view we coincide, preferring the adjective *pharmacopœial*, "of, or belonging to, a pharmacopœia," as defined by the author. His definition for *official* is "a term applied to such medicines as are directed by the colleges to be prepared or kept in shops."

Having thus spoken at length of the dictionary itself, and explained its great usefulness to the pharmacist and physician, as well as to the student, we can only briefly refer to the Appendix, the first eighteen pages of which, under the title of "explanation of Latin terms, phrases, etc.," give the rules and examples of the declension of nouns, adjectives and pronouns; the comparison, use and application of adjectives, etc., and contain several tables of nouns and adjectives, grouped together and selected with special reference to pharmacy and medicine.

The chapter "on writing prescriptions" addresses itself more particularly to the physician and medical student, with reference to the proper construction of prescriptions as far as language is concerned, and is followed by tables of doses, of chemical symbols, of the orders and families of the living mammalia, and of weights and measures.

It will be seen from the foregoing that this book possesses great value as

a lexicon, and is very useful also in other respects; as a work for frequent reference by the pharmacist, physician and student, it is heartily recommended.

Fownes' Manual of Chemistry, theoretical and practical. A new American from the twelfth English edition, embodying Watts' "Physical and Inorganic Chemistry." With 168 illustrations. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1885. 12mo, pp. 1056. Price, cloth, \$2.75; leather, \$3.25.

Nearly thirty-seven years have gone by since the original author of this work, George Fownes, died in the prime of his life, and although a number of revised editions have since been published, the author's name has been retained with them. But it is evident that with the rapid progress made during that period in physics and chemistry very little remains of the original work, so that its present shape is due to the literary labors of its principal reviser, Henry Watts. The death of the latter interrupted the labors of remodelling; however, a considerable portion having been accomplished, this, comprising physical and inorganic chemistry, was reviewed in last year's "Journal." The volume now before us consists of this portion, together with the organic chemistry revised a few years ago.

Applied Medical Chemistry. A manual for students and practitioners of Medicine. By Lawrence Wolff, M.D., Demonstrator of Chemistry, Jefferson Medical College, etc. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co., 1885. 8vo, pp. 174. Price \$1.50.

The necessity being admitted for medical men to possess a practical knowledge of chemistry in its various applications to medical science, a guide for laboratory work becomes very desirable, and this is well provided for by the work before us. It is divided into five parts, which treat of apparatus and manipulations, chemistry of poisons (poisonous metals and acids), physiological chemistry (pigments, carbohydrates, fats, etc.), excretions and concretions (urine, bile, feces), and sanitary chemistry (air, water, milk, flour, preserves, fermented liquors, pharmaceutical preparations). The arrangement is made in accordance with the author's system of demonstration, and we think will be found to be useful and convenient. The whole work is concisely written; the descriptions of compounds as well as of reactions, though designedly brief, give, as a rule, the important characteristics; yet some of the reactions would appear to deserve additional details, as for instance the difference between antimony and copper in the application of Reinsch's test. A very useful addition to each part is a syllabus of such operations and processes which the student should perform to thoroughly familiarize himself with the different subjects. The appendix contains a brief but valuable account of the ptomaines, a number of useful tables, and a good index.

The work will doubtless be productive of much good in acquainting the medical student with the essentials of such investigations which he may be called upon to perform as a part of his professional duties; and owing to its conciseness and accuracy will also prove of benefit to pharmacists and others who may not find it convenient to consult more extensive volumes on the characters and analysis of substances embraced within the scope of Dr. Wolff's book.

The Physician's Visiting List for 1886. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co.

This is the thirty-fifth yearly issue, and as heretofore is published in several sizes.

The Medical News Visiting List, 1886. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co.

This visiting list makes its appearance for the first time, we believe, and in its red seal binding and gilt edges is quite attractive. Though the pages are somewhat wider and longer than has been customary with similar publications, it is neither unhandy for being carried in the pocket, nor inconvenient for ready use as a memorandum book. The 48 pages of printed text contain, among others, lists of incompatibles, antidotes and doses, a therapeutic table, and directions for the ligation of arteries, for the use of disinfectants, for the examination of urine, etc. The tables of weights and measures are supplemented by a graphic chart, showing at a glance the correct equivalents of centimeters and inches, of grains and decigrams, of drachms or ounces and grams, of minims, fluidrachms or fluidounces and cubic centimeters, and of the degrees of the centigrade and Fahrenheit thermometer scales. About 200 blank pages, suitably arranged, are intended for the necessary records of a practice aggregating thirty patients per day. This visiting list is published at the price of \$1, and is provided with patent thumb-letter index for rapid use, at 25 cents additional.

Proceedings of State Pharmaceutical Associations for 1885.

The following reports of meetings held during the present year, of which condensed accounts were published in our July number, have been received, in addition to those previously noticed:

Alabama; pp. 26. The fifth annual meeting will be held at Birmingham, on the second Tuesday of May, 1886; G. M. Bains, local secretary.

Indiana; pp. 113. The fifth meeting will take place at Lafayette, at the call of the Executive Committee; David Hilt, local secretary.

Kentucky; pp. 54. The ninth meeting will convene at Bowling Green, on the first Wednesday in May, 1886; Wm. Turner, corresponding secretary.

Louisiana; pp. 54. The fourth meeting will assemble in New Orleans, on the third Wednesday in April, 1886; Mrs. E. Rudolf, corresponding secretary.

Maryland. Proceedings for 1884, pp. 58; for 1885, pp. 58. The fourth meeting will convene in Annapolis, on the first Tuesday in June, 1886; M. L. Byers, Hagerstown, secretary.

Nebraska; pp. 43. The fifth meeting will be held in Omaha, on the second Tuesday in May, 1886; Chas. J. Danbach, local secretary.

New York; pp. 324. The eighth meeting will take place in Rochester, on the second Tuesday of June, 1886; C. H. Haskin, local secretary.

Ohio; pp. 157. The eighth meeting will be held in Springfield, June 2, 1886; Chas. Ludlow, assistant secretary.

Pennsylvania; pp. 182. The ninth meeting will convene in Lebanon, on the second Tuesday in June, 1886; Geo. R. Ross, assistant secretary.

Virginia; pp. 81. The fifth meeting will assemble in Alexandria, on the second Tuesday of May, 1886; Edgar Warfield, local secretary.

Wisconsin; pp. 87. The seventh meeting will take place at Fond du Lac, August 10, 1886; F. M. Givings, local secretary.

Grundlagen der Pharmacognosie. Einleitung in das Studium der Rohstoffe des Pflanzenreiches. Von F. A. Flückiger und A. Tschirch. Berlin: Julius Springer, 1885. 8vo, pp. 257.

Principles of Pharmacognosy. Introduction into the study of the crude products of the vegetable kingdom.

When the first edition of this work made its appearance, in 1873, it was duly noticed in this Journal; and now, on the publication of the second and enlarged edition, we may refer to what we then said concerning the importance of such a treatise as a guide in the preliminary study of histology, preceding the study of vegetable drugs.

In this new edition the arrangement of the material remains in the main as before, and it is chiefly in the details that differences are observed, not merely in incorporating the results of the more recent investigations, but also in the enlarged scope.

The first part of the work, relating to the study of *materia medica* in general, has been revised and rewritten by Prof. Flückiger, in his usual clear and comprehensive manner. The second part of the work, relating to morphology and anatomy, has been rewritten and materially enlarged by Prof. Tschirch. After considering the various morphological parts of plants, such as roots, rhizomes, wood, bark, leaves, etc., the remaining portion, about two-thirds of the work, is devoted to vegetable anatomy, beginning with the cell, its contents, the cell wall, the cell forms, etc., and passing then to the different tissues, keeping in view, besides the anatomical structure, also the physiological functions of the same. The different conditions of the tissues, and the development of the various forms, are explained and illustrated almost exclusively from officinal drugs, or from parts of plants in which officinal secretions or excretions are produced; the study of vegetable anatomy is thus invested with peculiar interest to the student of *materia medica*. A brief chapter on pathological growths, galls, and another on micro-chemical reagents conclude the work.

The subject matter of the work, the lucid and attractive manner of its treatment, the literary references, and the handsome illustrations (186 in number), all combine to make the work a most valuable one; and we are pleased to learn that it is likely to become also accessible to those who are not conversant with the German language, since Prof. F. B. Power has undertaken its translation into English.

Milk Analysis and Infant Feeding. A practical treatise on the examination of human and cows' milk, cream, condensed milk, etc., and directions as to the diet of young infants. By Arthur V. Meigs, M.D., etc. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co., 1885. 12mo, pp. 102. Price, in cloth, \$1.

From a large number of analyses made by the author the conclusion is arrived at that normal human milk has an alkaline reaction, and contains about 1 per cent. of casein; the average composition of the milk of forty-three women being water 87.163, fat 4.283, casein 1.046, sugar 7.407 and ash

101. Based upon these results and upon the composition of ordinarily good milk and cream, which are easily procurable in most cities, the infants' food is recommended to be prepared by mixing two tablespoonfuls of cream, one of milk, two of lime water and three of sugar water, the latter to be prepared by dissolving 17½ drachms of pure milk sugar in 1 pint of water.

Tracts on Massage. No. II. The physiological effects of Massage. Translated from the German of Keibmayer, with notes, by Benjamin Lee, A.M., M.D., etc. Philadelphia, 1885. Pp. 46. Price 25 cents.

The tract shows that the object of massage is to arouse the normal physiological processes of the organism to increased activity, to excite a more vigorous tissue-transformation and interchange, and to reduce congestions and inflammations; and that it is also the most efficient means of promoting the absorption of all pathological products and deposits which can be thrown back into the general circulation without risk to the system.

Fourth Annual Report of the Illinois Board of Pharmacy; with Abstract of State Pharmacy Register. Springfield, Ill., 1885. 8vo, pp. 200.

The Board consists of Geo. Buck, Chicago; John E. Espey, Bloomington; Herman Schroeder, Quincy; Albert E. Ebert, Chicago, and Charles W. Day, Springfield.

Second Annual Report of the State Agricultural Station at Amherst, Mass. Boston, 1885. 8vo, pp. 166.

New York Cancer Hospital. First annual report. 1885.

Duty of the State to the Medical Profession. An address delivered before the Medical Alumni Association of the University of Michigan, June 24, 1885, by Conrad George, M.D., Ann Arbor, Mich. Pp. 11.

Reprint from the "Physician and Surgeon."

An Address on Cholera Infantum. By William Perry Watson, A.M., M.D., Jersey City, N. J. Pp. 21.

Reprint from "Archives of Pediatrics."

The Therapeutics of high temperatures in young children. By William P. Watson, A.M., M.D., Jersey City, N. J.

Reprint from "Archives of Pediatrics."

Observations on several Zoogloea and related forms. By William Trelease, Sc.D. Pp. 24.

Reprint from "Studies from the Biological laboratory of the John Hopkins University," Vol. III.

The spot disease of Strawberry leaves, Ramularia Tulasnei, Sacc. By Wm. Trelease. Pp. 20.

From the second annual report of the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station.

A Manual of Weights, Measures and Specific Gravity, including principles of metrology; the weights and measures now in use; weight and volume, and their reciprocal relations; weighing and measuring; balances (scales) and weights; measures of capacity; specific weight and specific volume and their determination and practical applications; with rules and tables. By Oscar Oldberg, Pharm.D., Professor of Pharmacy and director of the pharmaceutical laboratory of the Chicago College of Pharmacy. Chicago: published by the Author, 1885. 8vo, pp. 238.

The confusion which has heretofore existed in medical metrology has been, to a considerable extent, done away with by the gradual introduction of the metric system in most civilized countries. It cannot be denied that this system in English-speaking countries has not yet gained a popular foothold to such a degree as had been anticipated by its more sanguine advocates; but it should also be remembered that in France where the system was perfected and first legally introduced, forty or fifty years were necessary before it was thoroughly understood and used by the general public, while at the present time scientists throughout the whole world are not only familiar with it, but employ it in their investigations. We, therefore, regard its general use merely as a question of time. This would probably be favored, if existing weights were so far modified as to have a simple relation to the metric units; at any rate an accurate relation is as desirable as between the units of weight and measure in common use.

In Great Britain the imperial fluidounce in use, at 62°F., contains exactly one avoirdupois ounce = 437½ troygrains of water; but neither the multiples nor the subdivisions agree between weight and measure, or have any simple relation to the troygrains, except that the imperial gallon is equal to 10 avoirdupois pounds or 70,000 troygrains. The wine measure in use in the United States shows no such relation to either avoirdupois or to troyweight; but the subdivisions of the fluidounce adopted for medical and pharmaceutical use, correspond to the subdivisions of the troyounce, though, necessarily, there cannot be a simple equivalent between the corresponding weights and measures. To secure such a simple relation the author proposes that the ounce be made equal to 32 grams and the fluidounce to 32 cubic centimeters; by dividing these into eight parts, the drachm would be equal to 4 grams and the fluidrachm to 4 cubic centimeters. Discarding the scruples the units would then be the gram and the cubic centimeter or fluigram, and by dividing these into sixteen parts, the grain and the minim would be obtained, differing but very slightly from the same medicinal weights as at present used. Without materially altering the present values, a simple relation would be established between apothecaries' weights and measures and between these and the metric system, and at the same time the larger units could be repeatedly divided by two without fractions until the new grain and new minim were reached. A fluidounce of water at its greatest density would then weigh exactly one (new) ounce; but if it was made to weigh that at a medium temperature of 20° or 22°C., the volume would be about ¼ per cent. greater than 32 cubic centimeters.

The volume deserves to be carefully read and considered by physicians and pharmacists, even though the reader may not agree with all the views advanced by the author.

OBITUARY.

HENRY B. PARSONS, one of the most talented and indefatigable of the younger American chemists, died August 21st, at Tucson, Arizona, aged 30 years. He was born in Syria, where his father was stationed as a missionary, and was educated in the United States, graduating as Pharmaceutical Chemist from the University of Michigan in 1876. He retained his connection with the University as assistant in the school of pharmacy for the following two years, and for the next three years accepted the position of Assistant Chemist in the Agricultural Department at Washington, occupying also for one session the chair of *Materia Medica* and Botany in the National College of Pharmacy. In 1881 he removed to New York, to take charge of the laboratory of W. H. Schieffelin & Co., and subsequently became editor of the "Druggists' Circular." In these various positions, as well as a member of the Committee of Revision of the Pharmacopoeia, of the New York College of Pharmacy, of the New York State Pharmaceutical Association, and of the American Pharmaceutical Association, he did the work assigned to him thoroughly and well. His sound knowledge, his skill as an experimenter, and his clearness as an observer, had opened for him a career of usefulness, which, measured by the results of the past, gave greater promise for the future, and his modest and genial disposition secured him a large circle of sincere friends.

DR. WILLIAM BENJAMIN CARPENTER, the eminent physiologist, died in London, November 10th, at the age of 72, from the effect of burns caused by the upsetting of a spirit lamp while he was taking a vapor bath for rheumatism. He was widely known as an author on human and comparative physiology and through his researches on the Foraminifera, and other low forms of life. He paid a visit to the American Pharmaceutical Association, at its meeting at Niagara Falls, in 1882.

Notice of the death of the following Graduates of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy has been received :

WILLIAM CARLTON BOYNTON, class 1884, died at his residence, in Auburn, Me., August 5, 1885, of typhoid fever. He had been a student at the Jefferson Medical College for one term.

FRANKLIN S. GARMAN, class 1872, died July 1, 1884, at his home in Lykens, Pa.

JEFFERSON OXLEY, class 1872, died at Nicholasville, Ky., October 11, 1885, of consumption, aged 43 years. As a subject for his thesis he investigated *Gaultheria* and *Epigaea*, and proved in the leaves the presence of arbutin and urson, which principles are now known to exist in many ericaceous plants. He was an ex-president of the Kentucky Pharmaceutical Association.

JOHN N. SHOFFNER, class 1868, died near Loudonville, O., August 24, 1885, from the effect of a wound received near Haley, Idaho. He was formerly in business in Bethlehem, and his remains were interred at his native place, Norristown.

INDEX.

TO VOL. LVII (VOL. XV, FOURTH SERIES), OF THE
AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHARMACY.

	PAGE
Abanico (<i>Celosia</i>).....	232
Abbott, <i>Helen C. de S.</i> Analysis of <i>Fouquiera splendens</i>	81
Abeja alezana (<i>Melipona</i>).....	431
Abrojo (<i>Tribulus</i>).....	233
<i>Abrus precatorius</i> , structure of seed.....	248
for poisoning cattle.....	242
Abstracts, commercial.....	513
Aburana (<i>Brassica</i>).....	306
Acacia albicans, its gum.....	543
<i>Farnesiana</i>	134
use in Mexico.....	233
<i>Acalypha chamaedrifolia</i>	598
Aceites (oils) of Pharm. Mexicana (<i>alcanforado</i> , <i>fosforado</i> , <i>sandalo com-</i> <i>puesto</i> , and others).....	286, 287
Acetum aromaticum.....	239
<i>camphoratum</i>	239
<i>carbolisatum</i>	239
<i>fumale</i>	239
<i>stomaticum</i>	239
<i>Achicoria dulce</i> (<i>Sonchus</i>).....	233
<i>Achiotillo</i> (<i>Bixa</i>).....	233
Acibar (aloes).....	233
Acidum aceticum aromaticum, Ph. Mex.....	287
<i>carbolisatum</i>	239
Acid aconitic, action on the heart.....	152
benzoic, test for true (resin).....	28
substances accompanying it.....	28
boric, calendulated.....	588
use in cholera.....	435
symptoms of poisoning.....	435
"glass".....	305
<i>carbolic</i> , causes of red color.....	25, 172
for disinfection.....	443
for freckles.....	505
as solvent for biniodide of mercury.....	613
cathartic.....	257, 258, 259
<i>chrysophanic</i> , in <i>cascara sagrada</i>	205
yield from <i>rhubarb</i>	614
does not pre-exist in <i>rhubarb</i>	617
<i>cinchotannic</i> , amount in <i>C. officinalis</i>	622
<i>citric</i> , freed from iron.....	24
<i>ergotic</i>	170

Acid hydriodic, preparation without danger.....	151
hydrobromic, preparation without danger.....	151
lycoctonic.....	458
nitric, test for.....	173, 336, 390
nitrous, test for.....	336, 390
opionylic.....	425
oxalic, sublimation of.....	605
polygonic, non-existence.....	22
sphacelic.....	170
sulphuric, spec. gr.....	152, 365
detection of nitrogen acids.....	336
tartaric, commercial.....	324, 364
trichloroacetic, as antiseptic.....	587
Acocote (Pentacripta).....	433
Aconitine, action on the heart.....	152
reduces silver and mercury salts.....	172
Aconite, action of the different alkaloids on the heart.....	152
Aconitum lycoctonum, alkaloids.....	458
napellus (delphinoides), use in Mexico.....	233
Aexoyatic (Ipomœa).....	233
Adiantum tenerum, use in Mexico.....	506
Adonidin, properties.....	577
Adonis vernalis, uses.....	577
Adormideras (Papaver).....	234
Aerated beverages, technical points.....	298
Aether cantharidini.....	239
phosphoratus.....	239
Agallas (nut galls).....	432
Agarico yesco (Boletus).....	234
Agave mexicana, uses.....	311
Agrimonia eupatoria, use in Mexico.....	234
Agua (water) of Pharm. Mexicana (de azahar, de hojas de capulin, ce- falica, and others).....	287, 288, 289
Aguamiel.....	234
Aguacate (Persea), (olorosa, cimarron).....	234
Aguardiente alcanforado.....	287
Ahuehuete (Taxodium).....	309
Ahuichichi (Bryonia).....	309
Ailanthus glandulosa, analysis.....	600
Alle de mexico (Alnus).....	309
Aje (fat of Coccus axin).....	309
Ajo (Allium).....	309
Ajolote (Siredon).....	309
Ajonjolí (Sesamum).....	309
Alamo (Populus).....	309
Albahaca (Ocimum).....	310
Albumen, auric chloride test.....	336
sublimated.....	520
not dissolved by the intestinal secretions.....	454
Albuminuria, chloral in.....	267
Alcabueil (Cynara).....	310
Alcachofa (Cynara).....	310
Alcaparra, false (Zygophyllum).....	601
Alcaravea (Carum).....	310
Alcohol, yield in bread-baking.....	436
(spirit) of Pharm. Mexicana.....	287, 289
Alcoholato (distilled spirit) of Pharm. Mexicana (de canela, de énula compuesto, de trementina compuesto, and others).....	289, 290
Alcoholatura (tinctures from fresh plants) of Pharm. Mexicana.....	290
Aleurites cordata.....	355
Alfalfa (Medicago).....	310

Alfilerillo (geranium).....	310
Alfombrilla sylvestre (Verbena).....	608
Algarobia glandulosa.....	542
Algin.....	544
Algodon (cotton) of Pharm. Mexicana.....	290
Alholva (fenugreek).....	310
Alhucema (Lavandula).....	310
Alkaloids, isolation of.....	396
Allen, A. H. Determination of ethyl nitrite in spir. aeth. nitr.....	183
Alligator pear (Persea).....	234
Almálica (mastic).....	310
Almendras (Amygdala).....	310
Almizcle (Moschus).....	310
Aloes, quantitative determination.....	287
detection in pharm. preparations.....	142
uses in Mexico.....	233
Aloin, reactions.....	404
Aloysia citriodora, use in Mexico.....	333
Alpiste (Phalaris).....	310
Alquimila del país (geranium).....	310
Alumni Associations of Colleges of Pharmacy:	
Louisville.....	219
Philadelphia.....	111, 154, 218, 631
Alveloz, use in cancer.....	328
Alverjon (Pisum).....	311
Amapola (Rhoeas).....	311
Amaryllis formosissima, use in Mexico.....	555
Ambar amarillo (amber).....	311
del país (Hymenaea).....	311
Ámbargris.....	311
Ambarina (Scabiosa).....	311
Ambrosia artemisiaefolia, use in Mexico.....	341
American Pharmaceutical Association.....	359, 607
Amenorrhoea, oleate of manganese for.....	369
permanganate of potassium for.....	459
Amianto (asbestos).....	311
Amole de bolita (Sapindus).....	311
raiz (Agave).....	311
Anar secá (Gomphrena).....	311
Amyl nitrite, antidote to strychnine.....	206
Amyris Caranna.....	388
Anacahuite (Cordia).....	311
Anæsthetic (atropin. morphine, etc.), local (Cannabis indica).....	206, 305
Andira inermis as anthelmintic.....	558
Andirin.....	558
Angelim amargosa.....	559
Angostura verdadera (Galipea).....	339
Anisillo cimarron (Schkuhria).....	339
Annatto, constituents.....	109
Anona Cherimolia, use in Mexico.....	553
glabra, use in Mexico.....	339
reticulata, use in Mexico.....	339
Anthemis cotula, histological and chemical examinations.....	376
acid of.....	379, 381
theoretical observations.....	381
Antimony, black, commercial.....	364, 514
Antiseptic (corr. sublim. and permang. pot.).....	337
iodol.....	605
Añil (indigo).....	339
Apio (parsley).....	339
Aplopappus discoideus, use in Mexico.....	553

Apocema (decoction) of Pharm. Mexicana (blanca de Sydenham, sudorifica, and others).....	290, 291
Aqua, of Pharm. Mexicana (albuminosa, ammonio-camphorata Raspail, camphorata, Goulardi, hæmostatica Pagliari, phagedænica flava and nigra, phenicata officinalis, picea)	288, 289
Aqua picis.....	241
Aquæ aromaticæ.....	274
Arachis hypogæa, use in Mexico.....	386
Arbol de la cera (Myrica).....	339
de las manitas (Cheirostemon).....	339
del Perú (Schinus)	340
Arbutin, crystallized.....	139
from Vaccinium vitis-idaea.....	321
Arbutose.....	139
Argemone grandiflora, A. mexicana, A. ochroleuca, uses in Mexico.....	506, 507
Argols, from Ohio wines.....	324
Aristolochia larga, A. redonda, uses in Mexico.....	340
fragrantissima, A. grandiflora, A. pentandra.....	602
Arnica montana, use in Mexico.....	340
Aro (Richardia).....	340
Aroma (Acacia Farnesiana).....	340
Arpophyllum spicatum, use in Mexico.....	506
Arrayan (Myrtus).....	340
Arrope de mora (Rob).....	291
Arroz.....	341
Arsenic, bromide, for pimples.....	311
Artemisia laciniata, A. mexicana, uses in Mexico.....	555
del país (Ambrosia).....	341
Arundo donax, use in Mexico.....	430
Asagrea tenuifolia, use in Mexico.....	430
Asarit (of Græger) non-existence.....	354
Asarone.....	354
Asarum europæum, chemistry	354
Asclepias sestosâ, use in Mexico.....	433
Atlanchana (Cuphea).....	341
Atropine, salicylate, neutral.....	384
Auric chloride, test for albumen.....	336
Avicennia nitida, A. tomentosa, uses.....	331
Axin (fat of Coccus axin).....	309
Axolotl (Siridon).....	309
Azafran (crocus).....	341
Azafrancillo (Carthamus).....	341
de Mexico (Escobedia).....	341
Azafranin.....	341
Azucar naranjada purgante.....	291
Baking powder	364
Balata industry of British Guiana.....	563
Bálsamo, of Pharm. Mexicana (anodino, católico, de Gonzalez, and others).....	291
Bálsamo de mezquite.....	543
negro (balsam peru).....	342
Balsamum tranquillans, Pharm. Mexicana.....	286
Banderilla 'Loeselia).....	385
Barbas de Chico (Clematis).....	385
Barbudilla (Dorstenia).....	433
Bark, red, of the Nilgiris, identity.....	92, 97
Barley, changes during malting.....	357
Bartung (Plantago) in Persia for dysentery.....	107
Bassia longifolia, analysis of seed.....	108

Batatas edulis, use in Mexico.....	387
Bean caper (<i>Zygophyllum</i>).....	601
Beauregard, H. Seat of active principle of vesicating insects.....	350
Bed bug poison.....	437
Behrend, P. Changes in barley during malting.....	357
Bejuco de verraco (<i>Chiococca</i>).....	386
Beleño blanco and negro (<i>Hyoscyamus</i>).....	342
Belladonna, estimation of alkaloid.....	582
leaves, commercial.....	364
and iodide of potassium.....	588
Belladonnine.....	108
Bellota, use in Mexico.....	385
Benjamin, Consul, Persian opium.....	36
Benjuf (benzoin).....	342
Benzin, as solvent for biniodide of mercury.....	613
Benzoin, commercial.....	365
Sumatra.....	153
Betabel (Beta).....	385
Betaine, in cotton seed.....	148
Betonica alopecurus, use in Mexico.....	385
Berberine, detection.....	452
Berraza (<i>Sium</i>).....	385
Berros (antiscorbutic plants in Mexico).....	385
Beurre d'iris.....	133
Bichy, W. Analysis of <i>Stillingia sylvatica</i>	529
Bidens crocata, use in Mexico.....	388
Bile, detection in urine.....	409
Birch tar, white.....	355
Bismuth and pepsin, sodium tartrate.....	417
peptonate.....	239
Bissel W. B. Extract of hops.....	166
Bixa orellana, use in Mexico.....	233
Black drink of the Southern Indians.....	389
Blair, A. Preliminary examination.....	10
Spiritus ammoniæ aromaticus.....	79
Blettia campanulata, B. coccinea, uses in Mexico.....	506
Blitum Bonus-Henricus, use in Mexico.....	603
Blood, detection in urine.....	503
Blue grass (<i>Chrysopsis</i>), use in the South.....	91
Blunt, T. P. Impurities in distilled water.....	300
Bocconia frutescens, use in Mexico.....	385
Boldoa fragrans, use in Mexico.....	385
Boletus igniarius, use in Mexico.....	234
Bolontibi (<i>Cissus</i>).....	385
Borago officinalis, use in Mexico.....	386
Borax deposits in California and Nevada.....	304
Boraja (<i>Borago</i>).....	386
Borregos de encina (nut galls).....	234
Bottle capping, gelatin.....	337
Bouvardia longiflora, use in Mexico.....	555
Brandy flavor.....	25
Brass on glass, cement for.....	26
Brassica sinensis.....	306
Brea de penca, B. de marqueta.....	386
Bread baking, by-products in.....	436
for diabetics.....	607
British Pharmaceutical Conference.....	516, 523
Bromine for bleaching sponges.....	240
detected by naphthol.....	504
Bromo-strychnine.....	253
Bronchitis, terpin for.....	293

Brusco (butcher's broom).....	342
Bryonia variegata, use in Mexico.....	309
Bryonin, detection.....	451
Buglosa (Anchusa).....	342
Bunchosia lanceolata, use in Mexico.....	432
Burdock, analysis of fruit and oil.....	51, 127
Butter, examination.....	401
quantitative examination.....	356
cacao, quantitative examination.....	356
Butterin, quantitative examination.....	356
Butua (Cissampelos).....	386
Buxus sempervirens, new alkaloid.....	145
 Cabalonga (Ignatia).....	386
Cacahuete (Arachis).....	386
Cacaloxochitl (Plumiera).....	386
Cacomite (Tigridia).....	386
Cadmium, separation from copper.....	382
Cæsalpinia coriaria, use in Mexico.....	430
Café de bellotas (acorn coffee).....	373
Cainca, use in Mexico.....	386
Cajeputol, identity with eucalyptol.....	237
Cake white, for the face.....	24
Calabash tree (Crescentia).....	107
Calabaza (Cucurbita).....	387
Calaguala (Polypodium).....	387
Calancapatle (Solidago).....	387
Calcium hippurate.....	605
Calomel, commercial.....	515
pill excipient for.....	594
manna and glucose dangerous.....	594
Calycanthus lævigatus, use in the south.....	89
Camellia japonica, C. oleifera, oil of.....	306
Camote (Batatas).....	387
de cerro (Oncus).....	387
Campanillo (Croton and Coutarea).....	433, 434
Camphor, motion of.....	444
pill excipient for.....	595
Baros.....	410
Camphora officinarum, oil of.....	406
Canada balsam, as pill excipient.....	595
Cancer, alveloz for.....	328
Canchalagua (Erythraea).....	387
Canela (cinnamon).....	386
Cannabis indica, active principle.....	264
as local anæsthetic.....	305
Cantharis eucera, use in Mexico.....	387
vesicatoria, seat of active principle.....	350
Caña fistula (Cassia f.).....	383
Cañamo (Cannabis).....	388
Cañnuela (Equisetum).....	388
Caoba (Swietenia).....	388
Capitaneja (Bidens).....	388
Capparis coriacea, C. cynophallophora, C. jamaicensis, C. siliquosa, C. spinosa, uses.....	558
Capsicum, adulteration of powder.....	364
Capsicum annum, C. cordiforme, C. dulce, C. frutescens, C. microcar- pum, C. violaceum, uses in Mexico.....	552
Capsulas medicinales of Pharm. Mexicana.....	373
Capuli (Physalis).....	434
Capulin (Cerasus).....	388

Caramel, detected by paraldehyd.....	171
Carafia (Amyris).....	388
Carbon-cement.....	547
and compounds, reactions.....	174
diffuses through porcelain.....	24
sources of.....	336
Cardo santo (Cirsium).....	430
Carotin, in annatto.....	109
Carrizo (Arundo).....	430
Carteria mexicana.....	601
Carvol, contains no phenol when fresh.....	376
Casamajor, P. Camphor motion.....	444
Cascalote (Cesalpinia).....	430
Casein, estimation in milk.....	436
Casia (Acacia flowers).....	340
Cassia Absus, seed in eye-diseases.....	295
brasiliensis, C. fistulosa, C. occidentalis, uses in Mexico.....	388
Cassie, in Grasse.....	194
Castin (from Agnus castus).....	332
Cataplasma, of Pharm. Mexicana (anodina, refrigerante, and others).....	373
Cathartin.....	257, 258
Cazeneuve, P. Preparation of nitrous oxide.....	398
Cebada (barley).....	386
Cebadilla de tierra caliente, C. del interior.....	430
Cebolleja, cebolleta (bulb of Veratrum sp.).....	431
Cebollo, (onion).....	386
Cedrela odorata, use in Mexico.....	431
Cedro colorado (Cedrela).....	431
Cedron (Lippia).....	333
Cedron seed (from Simaba).....	575
Cedronella Mexicana, use in Mexico.....	333
Celba, Celbo (Eriodendron).....	431
Cellulose, algic.....	547
Celosia cristata, use in Mexico.....	232
Cement, casein.....	382
for brass on glass.....	26
for glass on copper.....	505
for plaster casts.....	504
for porcelain.....	382
Cephalina esculenta, the bark.....	250
Cera de Abejas (wax).....	386
de campeche (wax from Melipona).....	431
Cerasus capollin, use in Mexico.....	388
Cerato of Pharm. Mexicana (de Bell, de Galeno and others).....	373
Ceratum cosmeticum anglicum of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Cerveza (beer).....	373
Chandelon, F. Isolation of strychnia.....	396
Chaste tree (Vitex) uses.....	331
Chaulmoogra, structure of seed.....	145
Chautle (Blettia).....	506
Chayote (Sechium).....	506
Cheiramidine, from Remijia Purd.....	200
Cheiramine and salts.....	200, 203
Cheirostemon platanoides, use in Mexico.....	339
Chelidonine, detection.....	453
Chenopodium ambrosioides, use in Mexico.....	554
Chia (Salvia).....	506
Chicalote (Argemone).....	506
Chichem (Cassia Absus).....	295
Chicory to take the place of taraxacum.....	515
Chile pasillo, C. tzincunayo, and others (Capsicum).....	552

Chilillo (<i>Polygonum</i>).....	552
Chilpantlacol (<i>Pentstemon</i>).....	431
Chiococca angulifuga, use in Mexico.....	386
Chirimoya (<i>Anona</i>).....	553
Chloral hydrate in albuminuria.....	267
as anæsthetic.....	150
incompatibility.....	370
detected by calcium sulphhydrate.....	172
by diphenylamine.....	503
by naphthol.....	504
and phenol.....	435
Chloroform, commercial.....	515
Chlorostrychnine.....	255
Chochos (<i>Lupinus</i>).....	553
Chocolate, commercial.....	276
anti-diabetic.....	505
Cholagogues, relative value.....	502
Cholera, preventive measures.....	221
boric acid for.....	435
Choline, from hop.....	323
Chrysarobin, staining prevented.....	381
in liquor gutta perchæ.....	437
Chrysophan.....	614
Chrysopsis graminifolia, use in the south.....	91
Chrysoretin.....	257, 258
Cidra (<i>Citrus</i>).....	386
Cigars and Cigarettes of Coca.....	613
Cinchocerotin (<i>Kerner's</i>).....	458
Cinchol, properties.....	457
Cinchona erythrantha.....	96
ledgeriana contains quebrachol.....	457
magnifolia.....	95
micrantha.....	93
pubescens.....	95, 96
robusta.....	95
succirubra.....	93
analysis.....	98, 600
Cinchonas, cultivation in Bolivia.....	38
supposed mistake in East India.....	92, 97
harvesting of bark.....	40
assay.....	600, 626, 628
extraction of alkaloids.....	622
Cinchonamine and salts.....	200
Cintul (bulb of <i>Veratrum</i>).....	431
Cirsium Mexicanum, use in Mexico.....	430
Ciprés comun, C. de Mexico.....	432
Cirucllo agrio (<i>Spondias</i>).....	432
de España (<i>Cerasus</i>).....	386
Ciruclillo (<i>Bunchosia</i>).....	432
Cissampelos Pareira, use in Mexico.....	386
Cissus acida, use in Mexico.....	385
Citrus vulgaris, use in perfumery.....	132
<i>Classen, Edo.</i> Arbutin from <i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i>	321
<i>Clavillo (Juliana)</i>	432
Clavo de especia (<i>Caryophyllus</i>).....	386
Clematis sericea, use in Mexico.....	386
Clerodendron infortunatum, C. inerme, uses.....	331
Cloves, powder adulterated with sassafras bark.....	240
Clove bark, false, structure.....	559
cinnamon, structure of bark.....	559
<i>Cobenzl, A. and C. Schmitt.</i> Gallisin.....	42

Coca, alkaloids, properties.....	465
assay.....	466
cigars and cigarettes.....	613
de Levante (Cocculus).....	386
del Perú (Erythroxylon).....	386
Cocaine and its salts.....	31, 465, 596
preparation.....	436, 607
use of.....	78
antidote to morphine.....	240
citrate, C. salicylate.....	34
Cocainoidine.....	475
Cochineal insect.....	590
Cochlearia officinalis, use in Mexico.....	432
Coco (Cocos).....	432
Coffee, Brazilian analysis.....	456
Cola de caballo (Equisetum).....	388
de pescado (isinglass).....	386
Colchicine, crystallised.....	35
Colchicum alpinum, use in Mexico.....	432
Collections, as a means of instruction.....	591
Colleges of Pharmacy (Albany, Louisville, New York, Pittsburg, St. Louis).....	219, 220
Collinsonia canadensis, analysis.....	228
Collodium creasotated.....	27
morfinado of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Collyrium, of Pharm. Mexicana (cæruleum, c. sulfato zincico, and others).....	288, 289
Colocynthein, detection.....	451
Cologne, acid and alkaline.....	292
of Pharm. Mexicana.....	289
Color, green for oils and ointments.....	27
Colorin (Erythina).....	432
de peces (Piscidia).....	433
chiquito (Rhynchosia).....	433
Comino (cumin).....	386
Cominos rústicos (Thapsia).....	433
Conchairamidine and salts, from Remijia Purd.....	200, 205
Conchairamine and salts.....	200, 204
Cusconine and salts.....	200, 202
Conglutin (from Leguminosæ).....	574
Conium maculatum, alkaloid of the root.....	247
Constipation, ergot in.....	462
Consumption, night-sweats of, picrotoxin.....	206, 515
Contrayerba (Dorstenia).....	433
de Julimes (Asclepias).....	433
Convallaria majalis, its value.....	266
Convolvulin, isolation.....	456
Copaiva, microscopically.....	27
Copal (from Elaphrium).....	433
Copalchi (Croton).....	433
Copper, separation from cadmium.....	382
detection in wine.....	173
oleate for corns.....	450
Cordia Boissieri, use in Mexico.....	311
Corns, phosphuretted oil for.....	241
oleate of copper for.....	450
Cornutine (Robert's).....	170
does not exist.....	336
Corrosive sublimate, injection of.....	556
Corteza de Drimis.....	434
Costomatl (Physalis).....	434

Cotton plant, hybrid (okra and cotton).....	106, 247
seeds contain betaine.....	148
analysis of press-cake.....	436
Cough, glycerin vapor for.....	173
weed (Gnaphalium).....	91
Courida bark (Avicennia).....	331
Coutarea laterifolia, use in Mexico.....	434
Crameria, use in Mexico.....	434
Cream of tartar, soluble, as pill excipient.....	595
of tartaraline.....	319
Creasote, test for phenol.....	296
excipient for pills of.....	595
Crasotated collodium.....	27
Crema fria of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Crescentia alata, use in Mexico.....	434
cujete, analysis of fruit.....	107
Cripps, R. A. Tincture deposits.....	243
and T. S. Dymond. Detection of aloes.....	142
Crocetin (from saffron).....	129
Crocine.....	130
Cross, Richard. Red bark.....	97
Croton niveum, C. pseudochina, C. reflexifolium, C. suberosum uses in Mexico.....	433, 434
Croton argyranthemum, C. chamaedrifolius, C. maritimum, C. tinctorius, uses.....	598
Croton from Georgia.....	597, 631
Crozophora tinctoria.....	598
Cuajilote (Rhus).....	434
Cuajilote (Parmentiera).....	434
Cuanchalata (Rajania).....	435
Cuapinole (from Hymenæa).....	311
Cuassia (Quassia).....	434
Cuautecomate (Crescentia).....	434
Cubebs, spurious.....	302, 353
test.....	348
Cucurbita maxima, use in Mexico.....	387
Cuernecillo de centeno (ergot).....	386
Culantrillo de Mexico (Adiantum).....	506
Culantro (coriander).....	386
Cundeamor (Momordica).....	506
Cuphea lanceolata, use in Mexico.....	341
Cupreine, properties.....	249
Cupreol, properties.....	457
Cupressus sempervirens, use in Mexico.....	432
Cupric oxide, excipient for pills of.....	594
Cuso (Brayera).....	386
Cyanides, detection in presence of other salts.....	551
Cynara cardunculus, use in Mexico.....	310
Dalmon, J. Arbutin and arbutose.....	139
Damiana, use in Mexico.....	553
Dandelion, to be replaced by chicory.....	515
Daphne salicifolia, use in Mexico.....	603
Daphnetin, chemistry of.....	145
Daphnidium cubeba.....	302
Datil (date).....	553
Denaro, A and V. Oliveri. Quassin.....	29
Dental mastic.....	241
Dentifrice.....	171
Diabetes, chocolate for.....	505
suitable food for.....	607

Diarrhoea mixture (Dunlap).....	372
(Veat).....	416
Dibromostychnine.....	254
Dicinchonine, preparation and properties.....	352
Dictamo blanco (Dictamnus).....	553
de Creta (Origanum).....	553
real (Passiflora).....	553
Digitalin, reaction of.....	551
preparation.....	606
Digitalein, Digitin, preparation.....	606
Diente de leon (Taraxacum).....	553
Diphenylamine, test for chlorine and nitrogen acids.....	503
Diphtheria, Sedum acre in.....	301
Disinfectant, euchlorine as.....	182
ozonein.....	556
Disinfectants, Squibb on.....	441
Doradilla (Lycopodium).....	554
Dorema ammoniacum, as false sumbul.....	366
Doronicum glutinosum, use in Mexico.....	387
Dorstenia contrayerva, D. Houstoni, use in Mexico.....	433
Doundake bark (Sarcocephalus).....	250
Dover's solution (New Jersey).....	235
caution against N. J.....	329
Drenocarpus microphyllus, use in Brazil.....	483
Dressing for joints, fixed.....	329
Drosera rotundifolia, utilizes animal food.....	106
Drugs, American, export of.....	515
from Central America.....	321
from Mexico.....	320
Drug inspector, Philadelphia.....	585
Drug store insurance.....	365
Dryandra cordata, D. vernicea, sources of wood oil.....	355
Drymis granatensis, D. mexicana, uses in Mexico.....	434
Dryol alanops aromatica, oil of.....	406
Dunstan, W. and Fr Ransom, Belladonna, estimation of alkaloid.....	582
alcoholic extract of Belladonna.....	584
Durazno (Persica).....	554
Dyer, W. J. Thistleton. Identity of the red bark of the Nilgiris.....	92
Dymond, T. S. and R. A. Cripps. Detection of aloes.....	142
Dysentery, ergot in.....	267
Ebert, A. E. Endorsing nostrums.....	53
Ecapatli (cassia).....	554
Editorials.....	52, 111, 156, 220, 367, 420, 591
Elæococca cordata, E. vernicea, oil of.....	354
Elaphrium copalliferum, use in Mexico.....	433
Elaterin, detection of.....	451
Electuario de beleño opiado of Pharm Mexicana.....	374
Electuarium hyoseyami opiatum of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Elixir calisaya and iron.....	512
cinchonæ.....	480
de coca del Perú of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Elixir iron, quinine and strychnia.....	482
de jaborandi of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
with quinine.....	477, 512
simple.....	479
Elixirs, coloring.....	511
flavoring.....	478
Emetina medicinal of Pharm. Mexicana.....	374
Emplastro (plasters) of Pharm. Mexicana (agglutinante, cera católica, de Vigo, and others).....	374, 375

Emplastrum (Pharm. Mexicana) catagmaticum ex Vigo.....	374
ex estabillo.....	375
lavandulæ compositum.....	374
picis compositum.....	374
Emulsion, cod liver oil.....	551
phosphorus.....	437
Encino (Quercus).....	554
de mar (Fucus).....	553
Enebro comun (Juniperus).....	553
Eneldo (Anethum).....	553
Enfleurance at Grasse.....	138
England, Joseph H. Tinctura ferri chloridi	113
Engler, J. Geo. Syrupus pruni virginianæ.....	168
Epazote (Chenopodium).....	554
Epicauta adpersa, E. vittata, seat of vesicating principle.....	350
Epidendrum pastoris, use in Mexico.....	506
Epilobium angustifolium, as weed in Maine.....	107
Equisetum arvense, use in Mexico.....	388
Erechthites hieracifolia.....	600
Ergot, constituents.....	170
test for age.....	241
pressed.....	519, 619
in constipation.....	465
in dysentery.....	267
in pulmonary diseases.....	267
Ergotinine.....	336
Erigeron canadense.....	600
Eriodendron anfractuosum, use in Mexico.....	431
Erysipelas, jaborandi for.....	177
Erythræa chilensis, E. jorullensis, E. stricta, uses in Mexico.....	387
Erythrina coralloides, use in Mexico.....	432
Escamonea.....	553
Escila (Scilla).....	553
del país (Paneratum).....	554
Escoba amarga (Milleria).....	554
Escobedia scabrifolia, use in Mexico.....	341
Escobedin.....	341
Escordio (Teucrium).....	553
Escorzonera de Mexico (Pineropappus).....	554
Esenbeckia febrifuga, use in Brazil.....	559
Eserine in tetanus.....	267
Especies of Pharm. Mexicana (amargas, diaforéticas, and others).....	375
Esperma (Cetaceum).....	553
Espinosilla (Hoitzia).....	554
Esponjilla (Luffa).....	554
Estafiate (Artemisia).....	555
Ether, impurities in	148, 606
acetic, antidote to illuminating gas.....	604
oxalic, for hypodermic injection.....	505
Ethyl iodide, preparation without danger	151
Eucalyptol, identity with cajeputol.....	237
Euchlorine, as disinfectant.....	182
Eupatorium aromaticum, E. fœniculaceum, E. rotundifolium, uses in the South.....	90
veronicaefolium, use in Mexico.....	601
Euphorbia pilulifera, analysis.....	147
pulcherrima, use in Mexico.....	555
Evoidia febrifuga, E. glauca, E. longifolia, uses.....	559
Examiner of drugs in Philadelphia.....	585
Extract, belladonna, alcoholic.....	584
Calabar beans, preparation and properties.....	192

Extract Calabar beans, commercial	196
cinchona, liquid	267
gentiana, unsuitable as general pill excipient.....	594
hop, by gasoline.....	166
malt, analysis.....	13
diastatic power.....	126
pomegranate bark, for tapeworm.....	336
vanilla.....	500
Extracts, powdered	365
of Pharm. Mexicana.....	375
Extraction, thorough	170
Extraits (perfumes)	138
Fats, ought to benzoinated	26
quantitative examination.....	355
as solvent for biniodide of mercury.....	609
Feet, fetid perspiration, lotion for	450
Ferric cinnamate, soluble in fatty bodies	609
hydroxide, colloidal derivatives.....	45
Ferrous iodide in glycerin	172
Fever, quebracho in	267
grass (Chrysopsis) use in the South.....	91
Fichtennadel oil (oil firwood)	102
Fire, red and white	605
Fireweed (Epilobium) in Maine	107
Fireworks, use of Magnesium	605
Flavors for elixirs	478
Flor de encina de Puebla (catkins of Quercus)	555
de nieve (Gentiana).....	601
de noche buena (Euphorbia).....	555
de San Juan (Bouvardia).....	555
de Santiago (Amaryllis).....	555
de Santo Domingo (Gentiana).....	601
Fluid extract, ergot	620
in dysentery of children.....	267
extracts, for making galenical preparations.....	511
precipitates in.....	511
Flückiger, F. A. Essential oil industry in Grasse	131
Fly water	292
Fog-fruit (Lippia) uses	333
Food, adulteration of	526
Forest wool	99
Fouquiera splendens, analysis	81
Fraxinus viridis, use in Mexico	556
Freckles, carbolic acid for	505
Fresa (Fragaria)	556
Fresno (Fraxinus)	556
Fullers' earth, as pill excipient	594
Galipea officinalis, use in Mexico	339
Galium pilosum, use in the South	90
Gallisin in glucose	42
converted into grape sugar.....	43, 152
Gambier of Johore, cultivation, etc	312
Gamboge, detected in mixtures	606
Gastric juice, nitrogenous substances, insoluble in	454
Gelatina glycerini (cosmetic)	242
Gelsemium sempervirens, use in the South	91
Gentiana ochroleuca, use in the South	91
calyculata, G. Hartwegi, G. mexicana, uses in Mexico.....	601
Georgia bark (Pinkneya), examination	161

Geranium cicutarium, G. Hernandezii, G. mexicana, uses in Mexico.....	310
German Apothecaries' Association.....	524
Gibbs, M. Cultivation of cinchonas in Bolivia.....	38
Gibson, Adam. Preparation and properties of extract calabar beans...	192
Gilmour, W. Cotton seed oil.....	565
Ginger ale and ginger beer, technical points.....	298
Ginseng, cultivation in Corea.....	307
false.....	590
Glass on brass, cement.....	26
copper, cement.....	505
"Glass, boracic acid".....	305
Gleanings from foreign journals...24, 170, 237, 292, 336, 382, 435, 503, 550, 604	
in materia medica.....106, 145, 247, 306, 352, 403, 456, 557	
Glicerado, of Pharm. Mexicana.....	375
Glucose contains gallicin.....	42, 152
dangerous excipient for calomel pills.....	594
Glue, transparent, for porcelain.....	174
Glycerin, commercial.....	515
frozen.....	273
jelly (cosmetic).....	242
vapor, for cough.....	173
verified.....	275
and tragacanth, as pill excipient.....	594
Glycerolate of ferrous iodide.....	172
Gmelina arborea, G. asiatica, G. parvifolia, uses.....	331
Gnaphallium Berlandieri, G. canescens, G. hirtum, G. viscosum, uses in Mexico.....	602
polyccephalum, G. purpureum, uses in the South.....	91
Gobernadora de México (Zygophyllum), de Puebla (Eupatorium), uses in Mexico.....	601
Goma de limon (from Elaphrium).....	433
mangle, properties.....	601
de nopal (from Opuntia).....	450
de Sonora, source.....	601
Gomphrena procumbens, use in Mexico.....	311
Gordoloba del país (Gnaphallium).....	602
Gore, G. Reaction of carbon and compounds.....	174
Gossypium absorbens, G. iodatum, of Pharm. Mexicana.....	290
Graduates in pharmacy, qualifications.....	220
Grajeas (granules) of Pharm. Mexicana.....	376
Gramma (Triticum).....	556
Granadita de China (Passiflora).....	553
Granules of Pharm. Mexicana.....	376
Grasilla (Sandarac).....	556
Grasse, (South of France) perfume factories.....	131
Gravill, Edw. D. Spurious cubebs.....	348
Greenish, Thomas. Pine or forest wool.....	99
Grimaux, E. Colloidal derivatives of ferric hydroxide.....	45
Grindelia glutinosa, use in Mexico.....	387
robusta for insect bites.....	559
Guachamacá, history.....	560
toxifera.....	561
Guacamacine.....	561
Guaco (de Guatemala, San Cristobal, Tabasco, Tampico, Vera Cruz.....	602
Guaiacum, solubility of resin.....	247
Guarana.....	602
Guayabo (Psidium).....	602
Guayacon.....	556
Gum resins, excipient for pills of.....	595
Gun cotton, process.....	591
Gynocardia odorata, structure of seed.....	145

Habilla de San Ignacio (Hura).....	602
Haba de San Ignacio (Ignatia).....	602
Hæmoglobin , troches.....	416
Hagenbuch, J. H. Examination of chocolate.....	276
Hanchinol (Heimia).....	602
Hárinas emolientes of Pharm. Mexicana.....	438
Hartwich, C. Cedron seed.....	575
Hedwigia balsamifera , use in Mexico.....	434
Hedychium spicatum , examination of rhizome.....	251
Heimia salicifolia , H. syphilitica, uses in Mexico.....	602
Helecho macho (Filix).....	556
Helenium nudiflorum , use in the south.....	91
Helianthus alatus , use in Mexico.....	388
Hemialbumose	570
Heno (Tillandsia).....	603
Henous confertus , seat of vesicating principle.....	351
Herniaria glabra , uses.....	247
Hess, Ed. H. Liqueur ipecacuanhæ et morphinæ.....	235
Hesse, O. Alkaloids of Remijia Purdieana.....	199
Sulphate of Quinine in Europe.....	128
Heterotheca inuloides , use in Mexico.....	340
Hibiscus abelmoschus , use in Mexico.....	232
Hiccough , jaborandi for.....	502
Hidralcohol aromático of Pharm. Mexicana.....	438
Hiel de toro (fel tauri).....	556
Higuerilla (Ricinus).....	556
Hill, John R. Color in liquor calcis saccharati.....	178
Hinojo (Feniculum).....	556
Hirschhausen, L. v. Detection of berberine, hydrastine, oxyacanthine.....	452
Hisopo de Mexico (Salvia).....	603
Holtzia coccinea , use in Mexico.....	554
Hojas de San Pedro (Daphne).....	603
Holmes, E. M. Spurious cubebs.....	302
Holz-wolle	100
Homoquinine , chemistry of.....	249
synthesis of.....	308
Honey , how best kept.....	26
Hop , choline from.....	323
extract by gasoline.....	166
Houdès, A. Crystallized colehicin.....	35
Howard, David. Analysis of E. I. cinchonas.....	98
Howells, Jas. O. Ohio wines, argols, tartaric acid.....	324
Huacamote (Manihot).....	603
Huamuchil (Mimosa).....	603
Huanita (Morelosia).....	603
Huazontle (Blitum).....	603
Huinar (Malva).....	603
Huitlacoche (Ustilago).....	556
Hurd, G. E. Examination of Anthemis Cotula.....	376
Hura crepitans	602
Hydrastine , detection.....	452
Hydrolatum (distilled water) of Pharm. Mexicana (flor. aurant., flor. citri, cinnamomi, lactuce, rosæ, and others).....	287, 288
Hydnocarpus anthelmintica , H. inebrians, structure of seeds.....	146
Hymenæa courbaril , use of resin in Mexico.....	311
Hypericum denticulatum , H. fastigiatum, H. formosum, H. perfoliatum, uses in Mexico.....	603
Hypodermic injections of Pharm. Mexicana.....	438
Ilex cassine , analysis of leaves.....	389
paraguayensis, analysis of ash.....	390

Illicium anisatum, analysis of fruit.....	426
cultivation in Annam.....	447
floridanum, chemical examination.....	278
microscopical examination.....	225
Illinois Board of Pharmacy, value of certificates.....	220
Illuminating gas, acetic ether, antidote.....	604
Indian black-root (Pterocaulon).....	91
Indol from strychnine.....	252
Infected solutions.....	512
Injection, intra-uterine, of corrosive sublimate.....	556
Ink, black, disappearing.....	437
stains removed.....	552
International Pharmacopœia.....	521
Pharmaceutical Congress, Sixth.....	154, 158, 525
Inyecciones of Pharm. Mexicana.....	438
Iodine, commercial.....	364
detected after taking iodoform.....	240
dissolved in oils.....	435, 550
Iodoform, bicarbonate of sodium or potassium as antidote.....	240, 459
detection of iodine after use.....	240
odor disguised.....	30
pencils.....	30, 337
uses in sores.....	30
Iodol, antiseptic.....	605
Ipecac, assay, review of.....	531
Ipecacuanha blanca (Richardsonia).....	604
de las minas de Oro (Psychotria).....	604
del país (Solea).....	604
Ipomœa muricata, I. triflora, uses in Mexico.....	233
Iris germanica in south of France.....	134
Iron mould removed.....	292
benzoate, soluble in fatty bodies.....	609
and quinine citrate.....	121
Itch remedy.....	27
Ivory stain.....	382
Jabon animal (soap).....	438
Jaborandi in erysipelas.....	177
in hiccough.....	502
in urticaria.....	335
Jacaranda lancifoliata, J. procera, uses.....	483
Jacarandá—rosa, J.—tau.....	483
Jacobson, O. Substances accompanying benzoic acid.....	28
Jalapa in Mexico.....	604
Jalapin, isolation.....	456
Jaldre (Orpiment).....	604
Jamaicine, in Andira inermis.....	558
Jarabe (syrup) of Pharm. Mexicana (de acónito, atemperante, balsamico, and others).....	438, 439
Jarbáo (Stachytarpha).....	335
Jasmin in perfumery.....	134
Jasminum grandiflorum, J. officinale, J. sambac uses in Grasse.....	135
Jenjibre (Zingiber).....	604
Jitomate (Tomato).....	604
Johannson, E. Detection of colocyntheïn, elaterin and bryonin.....	451
Johore, forests of.....	313
Jorquille in perfumery.....	135
Jugo de acacia (a kind of catechu).....	340
Juliana caryophyllata, use in Mexico.....	432
Jungk, J. F. Carl. Analysis of malt extract.....	13

426	Kairine, excretion of	152
447	Kamala, commercial.....	141
278	Kapur baros.....	410
225	Kayser, E. Substances contained in saffron.....	129
220	Kelp.....	544
604	Kennedy, G. W. Medical properties of two Rhamnus barks.....	496
91	Kerosene, deprived of odor.....	336
252	Krameria pauciflora, K. secundiflora, uses in Mexico.....	434
512	Kreissler, C. E. Oleate of Manganese.....	369
556	Kubli, M. Chemistry of Rhubarb.....	614
437	Kuegelgen, A. Detection of sanguinarine and chelidonine.....	453
552	Kuehnel, G. F. Analysis of Rhododendron maximum.....	164
521	Label, porcelain-like.....	242, 337
525	moulding prevented.....	242
438	drawer.....	590
364	on tin, paste.....	437
240	Laminaria digitata, L. stenophylla.....	544
550	Lanten (Plantago).....	604
459	Lantana camora, L. involucrata, L. mixta, L. nivea, L. odorata, L. pseudo-thea, L. trifolia, uses of.....	332
240	Lappine in burdock seed.....	128
30	Lard, benzoinated, in Grasse.....	137
337	as solvent for biniodide of mercury.....	612
30	Larinus maculatus, L. nidificans, L. subrugosus, sources of trehala.....	403
605	Lavandula angustifolia, L. latifolia, L. officinalis, L. spica, L. vera, in perfumery.....	131
531	Lead, detected in wine.....	173
604	Leather, rendered pliable.....	24
233	Leche para niños, Leche virginal of Pharm. Mexicana.....	439
134	Lechuca (Lactuca).....	604
292	Lemon verbena (Lippia or Aloysia), use.....	333
609	Lentejilla (Lepidium).....	604
121	Lepidium latifolium, L. virginicum, use in Mexico.....	432, 604
27	Letter from S. F. Troth.....	510
382	Liebschuetz, Morton. Examination of butter.....	401
	Linaza (Linum).....	604
	Linctus phosphoricus.....	437
438	Linimento of Pharm. Mexicana (de cloral and others).....	291, 440
177	Linimentum ammoniæ.....	151
502	Lippia callicarpæifolia, L. citriodora, L. dulcis, L. graveolens, L. lanceolata, L. mexicana, L. nodiflora, L. organoides, uses.....	333, 334
335	Lippiol, in Lippia mexicana.....	333
483	Liquor calcis saccharatus, color of.....	178
483	ferri nitratis.....	513
28	ipecacuanhæ et morphinæ.....	235, 329
604	sulphuratus.....	552
456	thioticus.....	552
604	Lirio de Florencia (Iris).....	604
558	Lochman, Ch. N. Examination of Collinsonia canadensis.....	228
439	Lœselia cærulea, L. coccinea, use in Mexico.....	385
335	Luffa purgans, use in Mexico.....	555
134	Lupinus albus, use in Mexico.....	553
135	Lycconitine, properties.....	458
604	Lycocotine, action on the heart.....	152
604	Lycopodium nidiforme, use in Mexico.....	554
451	Lyons, A. B. Alkaloid of coca leaves.....	465, 596
313	Dover's solution (New Jersey).....	329
135	Assay of ipecac.....	531
340	Maben, T. Commercial tannin.....	342
432	Mac Ewan, Peter. Baros camphor.....	410
13	Natural oil of camphor.....	406

<i>Mac Ewan, Peter.</i> Gambir of Johore.....	312
Test for phenol in creosote.....	296
Examination of old spir. aeth. nitr.....	189
<i>Machærium firmum</i> , use in Brazil.....	483
<i>Magnesium</i> in fireworks.....	605
carbonate for warts.....	384
<i>Maisch, H. C. C.</i> <i>Illicium floridanum</i> , chemically and microscopically.....	225, 278
<i>Maisch, J. M.</i> Gleanings in <i>Materia Medica</i>	106, 145, 247, 306, 352, 403
<i>Materia Medica</i> of the Mexican Pharmacopœia.....	231, 309, 339, 385
Pharmaceutical preparations of the Mexican Pharmacopœia.....	430, 506, 552, 601
Practical notes.....	291, 373, 438, 547
Commercial Spanish saffron.....	131, 151
Indigenous species of <i>Croton</i>	487
Useful plants of the <i>Verbenaceæ</i>	597
See also EDITORIALS.....	330
<i>Maize</i> , constituents.....	403
<i>Malouetia nitida</i> , source of guachamaca.....	561
<i>Malva angustifolia</i> , uses in Mexico.....	310
<i>scoparia</i> , use in Mexico.....	603
<i>Manganese</i> , oleate.....	369
Mangrove, black or olive (<i>Avicennia</i>).....	331
<i>Manihot aesculifolia</i> , uses in Mexico.....	234
Aipi, use in Mexico.....	603
Manna, dangerous excipient for calomel pills.....	594, 595
Marasquino de Zara.....	337
<i>Markoe, G. F. H.</i> Incompatibility of chloral hydrate.....	370
<i>Marrubium pseudo-dictamnus</i> , use in Mexico.....	553
<i>Martin, S. H. C.</i> Action of papain.....	569
Mastic, dental.....	241
Mastuerzo (<i>Tropaeolum</i>).....	385
Maté, analysis of ash.....	390
<i>McFarland, F. D. and H. Trimble.</i> Analysis of burdock fruit.....	127
Measures, Mexican.....	231
Meat, preservative salt.....	437
Meat juice, preparation.....	25
<i>Medicago sativa</i> , use in Mexico.....	310
<i>Méhu, C.</i> Solubility of biniodide of mercury in fatty bodies.....	609
<i>Melipona domestica</i> (Mexican bee).....	431
<i>Meloe tridentata</i> , use in Mexico.....	387
Menthol, examination.....	429
exhibited in oleic acid.....	430
importation.....	515
for itching.....	206
<i>Merck E.</i> Cocaine and its salts.....	31
Mercurous iodide, excipient for pills of.....	504
Mercury, biniodide, solubility in fatty bodies.....	609
cyanide, in syphilis.....	459
oleate, instability.....	613
neutral.....	176
preparation.....	513
oxide, presence in blue pills, etc.....	47
Methyl iodide, preparation without danger.....	151
Mezquite, products.....	542
Mexico, Pharmacopœia, see MAISCH, J. M.	
<i>Mikania guaco</i> , M. gonvelado, M. Houstoni, uses in Mexico.....	602
Milk, estimation of casein.....	436
action of papain.....	571
as vehicle for iodide of potassium.....	556

Milleria linearifolia, use in Mexico.....	554
Mimosa laccifera, source of Sonora gum.....	601
unguis-cati, uses in Mexico.....	603
Mimusops globosa, source of balata.....	563
Mixtura antirheumatica (Lines).....	416
Moechel, J. Robert. Gleanings from foreign journals.	170, 237, 292, 336, 392, 435, 503
Momordica charantia, use in Mexico.....	506
Mondamin (Indian corn).....	238
Mordagne, J. Adonis vernalis and adonidin.....	577
Morelosia Huanita, use in Mexico.....	603
Morphine, estimation in opium.....	391
cocaine antidote for.....	240
Mossy stone crop (Sedum) in diphtheria.	301
Moth paper.....	27
Mucilage, for mineralogical specimens.....	437
adhesive.....	382
preserved.....	512
elastic.....	505
Musk, statistics.....	25
Mustard sponge.....	380
Myoctionine, from Aconitum lycoctonum.....	458
Myrica jalapensis, use in Mexico.....	339
Myrobalans, black (chebula).....	248
Myrospermum Pereiræ, use in Mexico.....	342
Myroxylon Pereiræ, essential oil from the fruit.....	248
peruiferum, examination of the balsam.....	307
Myrtus arrayan, use in Mexico.....	340
Napelline, action on the heart.....	152
Naphthol as test for chlorine and bromine.....	504
for nitrates.....	503
Narcissus jonquilla in Southern France.....	135
Nasturtium amphibium, N. officinale, uses in Mexico.....	385
Naudain, E. H. Analysis of Pinckneya pubens.....	161
Naylor, W. A. H. Technical points in aerated beverages.....	298
Neddivattum plantations of cinchonas.....	92
Nemognatha chrysolmelina, N. lutea, blistering insects.....	351
Nerolin.....	604
Nessine, from Heimia syphilitica.....	603
Night sweats, picrotoxin in.....	206, 515
Nipples, sore, ointment for.....	437
Nitrates detected by naphthol.....	503
Nitrogenous substances insoluble in the gastric juice.....	454
Nitrous oxide, preparation.....	398
Nopal (Opuntia).....	449
Nostrums, endorsement of.....	52
Nutmegs are poisonous.....	23
Obituaries —Binns, John P.....	160
Boynton, W. C.,.....	640
Braithwaite, W.,.....	160
Carpenter, W. B.,.....	640
Crawford, W. H.,.....	224
Dickson, Robert W.,.....	224
Eldridge, G. W.,.....	358, 368
Fehling, H. v.,.....	463
Fink, Robert F.,.....	57
Garman, Franklin S.,.....	640
Geissler, Theo.,.....	463
Gellatly, W. A.,.....	160
Hassencamp, F. S.,.....	368
Jefferson, E.,.....	57
Kolbe, Herman,.....	112
Landerer, F. X.,.....	464
Lee, Charles S.,.....	368
Lewis, A. E.,.....	368
Loose, Jr., Fr.,.....	368
Lukens, Jas. T.,.....	57
Milne-Edwards H.,.....	464
Moore, C. Frank,.....	57
Owen, H. H.,.....	368
Oxley, Jefferson,.....	640

Obituaries—Paethorp, John H.,	57	Simes, Samuel,	224
Parsons, H. B.,	640	Smith, Ambrose,	208
Rogers, Robert Empie,	57	Williams, John L.,	57
Seitz, J. G.,	368	Woodward, Jos. Janvier,	57
Shoffner, J. N.,	640	Zeitler, E.,	224
Silliman, Benjamin,	112		
<i>Ochse, G. H.</i> Gleanings from foreign Journals.....	550,	604	
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> , use in Mexico.....		310	
<i>Ocotea terpenifera</i> (from <i>Pinus teocote</i>).....		233	
<i>Ocotilla</i> (<i>Fouquieria</i>).....		81	
wax.....		88	
Ohio, its wines and argols.....		324	
Oil, <i>Anthemis cotula</i>		378	
Chinese cabbage.....		306	
camphor, natural.....		406	
for adulterating oil of wintergreen.....		409	
cassia and cinnamon, spec. grav.....		24	
cottonseed, pharmaceutical uses.....	519,	565	
ergot.....		365,	620
eucalyptus, commercial.....		519	
fir leaf (<i>Waldwoll</i> oil).....		102	
<i>Gaultheria</i> in rheumatism.....		163	
adulterated with oil of camphor.....		409	
lavender, Grasse.....		131	
maize.....		404	
neroli, Grasse.....		132	
paraffin, uses.....		151	
peppermint, use in burns.....		206	
relations to spearmint.....		484	
yield in Michigan.....		600	
phosphuretted for corns.....		241	
rose, German.....	27,	108	
test of purity.....		242	
rosemary, Grasse.....		131	
saffron.....		129	
spearmint, relation to peppermint.....		484	
star anise, preparation in Annam.....		447	
tea, properties and use.....		306	
thyme, Grasse.....		131	
internal use.....		206	
turtle.....		337	
wood (from <i>Elseacocca</i>).....		354	
Oils, essential, industry in Grasse.....		131	
excipient for pills of.....	416,	595	
fixed, ought to be benzoated.....		26	
quantitative examination.....		356	
as solvents for biniodide of mercury.....		609	
green color for.....		27	
Oil sugars of Pharm. Mexicana.....		440	
Ointment, diachylon.....		514	
for sore nipples.....		437	
nitrate of lead.....		267	
Ointments, ought to be benzoated.....		26	
green color for.....		27	
of Pharm. Mexicana.....	548,	549	
<i>Oldfieldia Africana</i> , its wood.....		331	
<i>Oleo vermelho</i> (balsam of <i>Myroxylon</i>).....		307	
<i>Oleosacaruros</i> of Pharm. Mexicana.....		440	
<i>Oleum</i> of Pharm. Mexicana (<i>camphoratum</i> , <i>cantharidum</i> , <i>conii</i> , <i>jecoris aselli ferratum</i> , <i>matricariae</i> , <i>phosphoratum</i> , <i>santali comp.</i> , <i>stramonii comp.</i> , <i>vitelli ovorum</i>).....		286, 287	

Oleum rusci	355
Oliveri, V and A. Denaro. Quassin.....	29
Omi-zochitl (Polianthes).....	136
Oncus esculentus, use in Mexico.....	387
Opiata de copaiba compuesta, of Pharm. Mexicana.....	440
Opionin.....	425
Opium, estimation of morphine.....	391
Persian.....	36
Opuntia cochinillifera, O. Hernandezii, O. nopalilla, O. rosea, O. tuna..	449, 450
Oranges, as galactagogue.....	558
Orantin in annatto.....	109
Origano (Lippia).....	334
Origanum dictamnus, use in Mexico.....	553
Orris butter, Grasse.....	133
Oxyacanthin, detection.....	452
Oxytropine.....	108
Ozonein, as disinfectant.....	556
 Pa	
Paqua (Persea)	234
Painpaint for headache, etc.....	27
Palmer, J. Dabney. Poisonous properties of nutmeg.....	23
Panal (Lepidium).....	604
Paneratium illyricum, use in Mexico.....	554
Pancreas, digestive power.....	455
Pangium edule, use.....	562
Papain, action of.....	569
Papaver rhœas, use in Mexico.....	311
Papaverine, corrected formula.....	606
Paper, rendered pliable.....	24
moth.....	27
Parabuxinidine.....	145
Paraffinum iodatum.....	240
liquid, as a solvent and in analysis.....	151
Paraldehyd, as test for caramel.....	171
as hypnotic.....	96
as antidote to strychnine.....	436
in suppositories	552
Pareirine, hydrochlorate, use.....	105
Parmentiera edulis, use in Mexico	434
Passiflora cœrulea, P. dictamnus, P. mexicana, uses in Mexico	553
Passmore, F. W. Alleged decomposition of quinine by lime.....	294
Paste for labels on tin.....	437
Pastillas de cuantecomate of Pharm. Mexicana.....	440
Pata de gallinazo (Cinchona).....	95
Patent medicines. See NOSTRUMS.	
Paullinia barbadensis, P. costata, P. pinnata, P. sorbills, uses in Mexico	602
Pavy's solution.....	383
Pelosine, uses.....	105
Pencils, iodoform.....	30
Pentacripta atropurpurea, use in Mexico.....	433
Pentstemon barbatus, use in Mexico.....	431
Pepper, ground, test of purity.....	240
Peppermint, cultivation in Michigan.....	599
Pepsin, determination of the value.....	237
Percolation with boiling liquid, continuous apparatus.....	149
Periquillo (Tagetes)	603
Persea amplexicaulis, P. gratissima, P. pachypoda, uses in Mexico.....	234
Persica vulgaris, use in Mexico.....	554
Phalaris canariensis, use in Mexico.....	310

Pharmaceutical State Associations :	
Alabama.....	360, 636
California.....	632
Connecticut.....	360
Georgia.....	360
Illinois.....	632
Indiana.....	360, 636
Iowa.....	361
Kansas.....	361
Kentucky.....	361, 636
Louisiana.....	362, 636
Maryland.....	362, 636
Wisconsin.....	
Pharmaceutical Congress, International, Sixth.....	154, 158, 525
education.....	526
journals, change of title.....	56
legislation.....	367
qualifications.....	516
Pharmacopœia of Mexico. See MAISCH, J. M.	
Pharmacy in Great Britain.....	516
Phaseolus diversifolius, use in the South.....	90
Phenol, detection in creasote.....	296
and chloral hydrate.....	435
in Pinus sylvestris.....	106
Philadelphia College of Pharmacy :	
Class of 1884-1885.....	58
Delegates to Am. Pharm. Association.....	358
report of.....	589
Advances in instruction and requirements.....	1
Minutes of the College.....	50, 207, 358, 588
Officers elected.....	209
Report.....	207
Pharmaceutical meetings.....	51, 109, 153, 321, 590, 630
Queries.....	209
Trustees elected.....	590
Zeta-Phi-Alpha Society.....	219
Phosphorus, excipient for pills of.....	366, 596
Physalis costomati, use in Mexico.....	434
Phytosterin, from calabar beans.....	457
Picræna excelsa, use in Mexico.....	434
Picrocrocin.....	130
Picrotoxin, for night sweats.....	206, 515
Pilocarpus. See JABORANDI.	
Pildoras (pills) of Pharm. Mexicana (de Boncio, pacificas).....	440
Pills and excipients.....	593
discussion.....	630
keratin coated.....	338
Blaud's, how best made.....	595
of oil of thyme, for rheumatism.....	416
see the respective substances.	
Pilulæ, of Pharm. Mexicana (ex Bontius, opii compositæ, pacificæ).....	440
Pilules Dehault.....	382
Pimenta de America (fruit of Schinus).....	340
Pimples, bromide of arsenic for.....	311
Pinaroppappus roseus, use in Mexico.....	554
Pinkneya pubens, examination of.....	161
Pine wool.....	99
fraudulent.....	104, 105
Pinus nigra austriaca.....	99
religiosa, use in Mexico.....	233
sylvestris, structure of leaf.....	103

<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> contains phenol.....	106
Teocote, use in Mexico.....	233
<i>Piper anisatum</i> , spurious cubebs.....	302, 353
crassipes, spurious cubebs.....	353
Pipmenthol, examination.....	429
see also MENTHOL.	
<i>Piscidia erythrina</i> , use in Mexico.....	433
Piss-a-bed (<i>Telanthera</i>) use in the south.....	91
Plant food, liquid.....	382
<i>Plantago arenaria</i> , <i>P. cynops</i> , <i>P. lanceolata</i> , <i>P. major</i> , <i>P. psyllium</i> , uses of.....	107
<i>Plumiera rubra</i> , use in Mexico.....	386
<i>Pollanthes tuberosa</i> , in perfumery.....	135
Polishing powder.....	292, 505
Polvo (powder) of Pharm. Mexicana (<i>de contrayerva compuesta</i> , <i>galactó-</i> <i>fero</i> , and others).....	440, 441
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> , use in Mexico.....	552
hydropiper, analysis.....	21
use in Mexico.....	552
hydropiperoides.....	552
<i>Polypodium aureum</i> , use in Mexico.....	387
Pomada (ointment) of Pharm. Mexicana (<i>de cloral</i> , <i>de toronjil</i> , and others).....	441
Pomades, French.....	134, 136
Pomatum (ointment) of Pharm Mexicana (<i>ad scabiem</i> , <i>ex Aldereti</i> , <i>ner-</i> <i>vinum</i> , and others).....	291, 441, 549
Pomegranate bark, alkaloid.....	172
<i>Populus alba</i> , <i>P. nigra</i> , uses in Mexico.....	309
Potassa, caustic, commercial.....	514
Potassium, bicarbonate, antidote to iodoform.....	459
bichromate, use in syphilis.....	459
iodide, best given in milk.....	556
and belladonna.....	588
permanganate, use in amenorrhœa.....	459
excipient for pills of.....	514, 594
<i>Potio rosarum composita</i> , of Pharm. Mexicana.....	439
Poudre refulgente.....	292
<i>Pisum sativum</i> , use in Mexico.....	311
Precipitates in fluid extracts.....	511
Precipitation, how best effected.....	26
Preliminary education.....	51, 109, 111
examination.....	10
<i>Prescott, Albert B.</i> Diastatic power of extract of malt.....	126
School of Pharmacy of the University of Michigan.....	156
Prescriptions, factory made.....	509
Prickly pear (<i>Opuntia</i>) in America.....	449
<i>Procter, Wallace.</i> Frozen glycerin.....	273
<i>Prosopis dulcis</i> , <i>P. juliflora</i> , <i>P. microphylla</i> , products of.....	543
<i>Psidium pomiferum</i> , <i>P. pyrifera</i> , use in Mexico.....	602
<i>Pterocaulon pycnostachyum</i> , use in the south.....	91
Pulmonary diseases, ergot in.....	267
Pulvis of Pharm. Mexicana, (<i>dentrificius ex Commoto</i> , <i>dorsteniæ</i> comp., <i>feniculi comp.</i> , <i>jalapæ comp.</i> , <i>rosæ comp.</i>).....	440, 441
morphinæ acetatis compositus.....	363
<i>Quassia amara</i> , use in Mexico.....	434
Quasside.....	29
Quassin, chemistry of.....	29
Quebracho, use in fevers.....	267
Quebrachol, in <i>Cinchona Ledgeriana</i>	457
<i>Quercus barbinervis</i> , <i>Q. polymorpha</i> , <i>Q. tomentosa</i> , uses in Mexico.....	554

Quillaya, preferred to senega.....	551
Quina blanca (Croton).....	433
Quinine, alleged decomposition by lime.....	294
estimation in mixtures of the alkaloids.....	630
lactate.....	621
sulphate, production in Europe.....	27, 128
administration <i>per rectum</i>	34
pure.....	520
tannate, tasteless.....	550
Rajania subsamarata , use in Mexico.....	435
Ransom, Tr., and W. Dunstan. Alcoholic extract of belladonna.....	584
estimation of alkaloid of belladonna.....	582
Rasamalas (storax), source of.....	247
Rat poison.....	171
Red drops.....	236
Remedies, native Southern.....	89
Remijia Purdieana, alkaloids.....	199
Remington, J. P. Instruction at Phil. Coll. of Pharmacy.....	1
Reseda in perfumery.....	135
Resin, quantitative determination in soap.....	353
excipient for pills of.....	595
carbolyzed, for ingrowing toe nails.....	528
REVIEWS —Allen, A. H. Commercial organic analysis.....	413
Alumni, Philadelphia, 21st annual report.....	414
Artimini, E. Preservation of animal substances.....	415
Australasian Journal of Pharmacy.....	461
Behrens, J. W. Microscope in botany.....	317
Brunton, T. L. Text-book of Pharmacology.....	632
Clowes, Frank. Preliminary chemistry.....	412
Cocaine hydrochlorate and its nomenclature.....	270
Crocker, R. J. Table of metric weights and measures.....	461
Dragendorff, G. Thätigkeit des pharm. Inst. zu Dorpat.....	318
Untersuchungen des pharm. Inst. zu Dorpat.....	318
Flückiger, F. A., und A. Tschirch. Grundlagen der Pharmacog- nosie.....	637
Fownes, Manual of Chemistry.....	635
Hays, B. F. Carl Wilhelm Scheele.....	56
Index Medicus.....	271
Jahresbericht der Fortschritte der Agriculturchemie.....	460
Kellermann, W. A. Journal of Mycology.....	160
(botanical) Plant analysis.....	271
Lea. One hundred years of publishing.....	159
Lyman, H. A. Insomnia, etc.....	272
Maisch, J. M. Manual of Organic Materia Medica.....	55
Massachusetts State Board of Health, 5th annual report.....	56
Medical directory of Philadelphia, etc.....	270
Medical News', Visiting list.....	636
Meigs, A. V. Milk analysis and Infant feeding.....	637
Millsbaugh, C. F. American medical plants.....	317
Official Register of physicians and midwives in Illinois.....	270
Oldberg, Oscar. Outlines of a course of study in practical phar- macy.....	414
Manual of weights and measures.....	639
Orcott, Ch. R. Flora of Southern and Lower California.....	159
Physicians' visiting list for 1886.....	636
Proceedings, American Pharmaceutical Association.....	268
Ohio State Pharm. Association, 6th report.....	158
Reibmayr, A. Massage.....	318
Remsen, Ira Introduction to the study of carbon compounds.....	269
Robbins, D. C. Review of drug trade, 1884.....	269

REVIEWS—Sajous, Chas. E. Hayfever.....	415
Stammer, K. Chemical problems.....	461
Thomas, Joseph. Pronouncing Medical Dictionary.....	633
Trimble, H. Practical and analytical chemistry.....	462
Van der Kindere, L. L'université de Bruxelles.....	159
Vomáčka, A. Neue Ideen.....	319
Waddell, L. A. Physiological and medicinal action of fluoric acid.....	415
Wilder, Hans M. List of tests.....	56, 413
Wolff, Lawrence. Applied medical chemistry.....	635
Wormley, Theo. G. Microchemistry of poisons.....	268
Yate, L. M. Babyland.....	160
Year book of Pharmacy.....	268
Ziegler, Geo. J. Basic pathology of putrescent diseases.....	55
 Rhamnus catharticus, medical properties.....	496
Purshiana, contains chrysophanic acid.....	205
medical properties.....	496
Rheum anglicum, R. chinense, R. moscoviticum, R. palmatum tan- guticum, contain only traces of chrysophanic acid.....	614
sibiricum, only, contains chrysophanic acid.....	614
Rhigolene as anaesthetic.....	206
Rhizophora mangle, R. Candel, use of gum.....	601
Rhododendron maximum, analysis.....	164
Rhubarb, chemistry of.....	614
Chinese, source of.....	249
Rhus metopium, R. perniciosa, uses in Mexico.....	434
Rhynchosia precatória, uses in Mexico.....	433
Richardia æthiopica, use in Mexico.....	340
Ringworm, chrysarobin for.....	437
Rosmarinus officinalis, in perfumery.....	131
Rother, R. Citrate of iron and quinine.....	121
elixirs of quinine.....	477
sodio bismuth tartrate and pepsin.....	417
tincture of vanilla.....	500
Rusby, H. H. Southern native remedies.....	89
Russia leather.....	242
Rust spots removed.....	292, 552
Ryania coccinea.....	561
 Saffron, adulterations.....	491
Spanish, commercial.....	487
substances contained in.....	129
bitter.....	130
Salts, deliquescent, excipient for pills of.....	595
Salvia axillaris, S. chian, S. linearis, S. polystachya, use in Mexico.....	506
poblana, S. real de Puebla (Lippia) uses.....	334
Samadera indica, contains quassia.....	575
Sampson snake root (gentiana), uses in the South.....	91
Sanguinarine, detection.....	453
Santolina chamaecyparissus.....	520
Sapindus molle, use in Mexico.....	311
Saponimentum.....	26
Sarcocephalus esculentus, the bark.....	250
Sarracenia variolaris, use in the South.....	59
Scabiosa atropurpurea, use in Mexico.....	311
Scammony, commercial.....	153
Schimsch (Cassia Absus) in eye diseases.....	295
Schinus molle, use in Mexico.....	340
Schkuhria abrotanoides, use in Mexico.....	339
Schlegel, C. E. Analysis of star anise.....	426
Schmitt, C. and A. Cobenzl. Gallisin in glucose.....	42

<i>Schuchardt, H. J.</i> Products of mezquite.....	542
and <i>H. Trimble.</i> Analysis of <i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	21
Science Hall, University of Wisconsin, destroyed by fire.....	54
Sea-weed, treating.....	544
<i>Secchium edule</i> , use in Mexico.....	506
<i>Sedum acre</i> , use in diphtheria.....	301
<i>Semen cismae</i> (<i>Cassia Absus</i>).....	295
<i>Senter, Harold.</i> Oxide of mercury in blue pills, etc.....	47
Senna leaves, chemical history of active principles.....	256
Senna sugar, properties.....	557
Sennit, properties.....	557
<i>Sericocarpus tortifolius</i> , use in the South.....	90
Serum, sublimated.....	520
<i>Sesamum orientale</i> , use in Mexico.....	309
<i>Shenstone, W. A.</i> Experiments with strychnine.....	252
Shoe blacking.....	174
Silk, antiseptic.....	351
Silver plating solution.....	28
nitrate, excipient for pills of.....	364, 514, 594
oxide, excipient for pills of.....	594
<i>Simaba cedron</i> , <i>S. Waldivia</i> , uses.....	575
<i>Simaruba medicinalis</i> , <i>S. officinalis</i> , <i>S. versicolor</i> , uses.....	575
<i>Siredon Humboldtii</i> , use in Mexico.....	309
Sirope de dentition, (<i>Delabarre</i>).....	20
<i>Sium angustifolium</i> , use in Mexico.....	385
<i>Stocum, F. L.</i> <i>Anthemis cotula</i>	381
Soap, quantitative determination of resin.....	383
as pill excipient.....	595
Soda water apparatus, Luken's first make.....	57
Sodio-bismuth tartrate and pepsin.....	417
Sodium, alginate, uses.....	546
bicarbonate, how to keep.....	28
antidote to iodoform.....	240
iodide, hypodermically.....	523
koussinate, preparation.....	239
salicylate, stable solution.....	292
<i>Soja hispida</i> , analysis of bean.....	108
<i>Solea verticillata</i> , use in Mexico.....	604
<i>Solidago montana</i> , use in Mexico.....	387
odora, use in the South.....	90
<i>Sonchus ciliatus</i> , <i>S. oleraceus</i> , uses in Mexico.....	233
Southern Peruvian (<i>Calycanthus</i>), use in the South.....	89
Species of Pharm. Mexicana (<i>amaræ</i> , <i>aromaticæ</i> , <i>diaphoreticæ</i> , <i>emolli-</i> <i>entes</i> , <i>pectorales</i>).....	375
<i>Spiritus ætheris nitrosi</i>	522
determination of ethyl nitrite.....	183
examination of an old specimen.....	189
<i>ammonia aromatics</i>	79
<i>Spondias purpurea</i> , use in Mexico.....	432
Sponges, bleached by bromine.....	240
Squill for rats.....	171
<i>Squire, P. W.</i> Commercial kamala.....	141
<i>Stachytarpha jamaicensis</i> , use.....	335
Still, used by the Annamites.....	448
<i>Stillingia sylvatica</i> , analysis of root.....	529
<i>Stockman, Ralph.</i> Active principle of senna leaves.....	256
<i>Strophantid</i> , properties.....	630
Strychnine, experiments.....	252
isolation.....	396
amyl nitrite as antidote.....	206
paraldehyde as antidote.....	436

<i>Strutzel, A.</i> Nitrogenous substances insoluble in the gastric juice.....	454
Sugar, beet root, formation.....	171
cane, detected in sugar of milk.....	383
senna.....	557
Sui (spikes of <i>Abrus precatorius</i>).....	242
Sulphur, precipitated, commercial.....	364
Sulphuretted hydrogen, free from arsenic.....	551
Sumbul, false.....	366
Suppositories with paraldehyde.....	552
Swietenia mahoganii, use in Mexico.....	388
Syphilis, cyanide of mercury in.....	459
bichromate of potassium in.....	459
Syrups of Pharm. Mexicana (aconite, bals. tolu, belladonna, benzoes, Crescentia alata, extr. opium, depurans Chavert, fruit, narceine, temperans, storax).....	438, 439
Syrup, apricot.....	174
calcium hippurate.....	606
Coxe's hive, original make.....	153
pineapple.....	174
prunus virginianæ.....	168
quassia.....	292
tolu, benzin odor of old.....	606
Syzygium Jambolanum, use in glycosuria.....	428
<i>Tagetes lucida</i> , use in Mexico.....	603
Tanne (seeds of <i>Camellia Thea</i>).....	307
Tannin, commercial.....	342
Tapeworm, extract of pomegranate root bark.....	336
Taraxacum, to be replaced by chicory.....	515
mexicanum, use in Mexico.....	553
Tartar emetic, commercial.....	514, 521
Tartaralime (and cream of).....	320
Taxodium mucronatum, use in Mexico.....	309
Teak, African (<i>Oldfieldia</i>), use of.....	331
East India (<i>Tectona</i>), use of.....	330
<i>Tectona grandis</i> , use of.....	330
Telanthera polygonoides, use in the South.....	91
Terminalia chebula, use.....	248
Terpin, preparation.....	293
in bronchitis.....	293
Tetano-cannabin.....	265
Tetanus, eserine in.....	267
Tetrahydro-parachinanisol.....	88
Thallin, properties.....	88
Thapsia asclepium, use in Mexico.....	433
Theriac of Pharm. Mexicana.....	548
Thompson, W. B. Preliminary examination.....	65
Thymus vulgaris, in perfumery.....	131
Tichborne, C. R. C. Neutral oleate of mercury.....	176
Tigridia pavonia, use in Mexico.....	386
Tillandsia usneoides, use in Mexico.....	603
Tinctura balsamica, Ph. Mex.....	291
benzolna composita Ph. Mex.....	439
digitalis, deposit.....	243
ferri acetatis, deposit.....	243
Bestucheff's.....	25
chloridi.....	113
discussion.....	153
gelsemium, green.....	91
jalapæ composita, Ph. Mex.....	548
iodine as blowpipe reagent.....	293

Tinctura lobeliae aetherea, deposit	243
nicotianae composita Ph. Mex.	288
nucis vomicae, deposit	244
opii, assay	513
deposit	244
deodorata	364
c. opio et sapone camphorata, Ph. Mex.	291
vanilla	500
Tinctures, deposit	243
Tintura (tincture) of Pharm. Mexicana	547
Titanium, carbonate, a fraud	130
Toe-nails, ingrowing, carbolic acid for	528
Toluifera balsamum	342
Toothache drops	437
Tooth paste	37
powder	440
Toronjil (Cedronella), use in Mexico	333
Tournesolia tinctoria	598
Tragacante del país	450
Trebizond tea (Vaccinium arctostaphylos)	308
Trehala, sources and analysis	403
Triaca of Pharm. Mexicana	548
Tribulus terrestris, use in Mexico	233
Trimble, Henry. Glycerin vapors	275
oils of peppermint and spearmint	484
and F. D. McFarland. Burdock fruit	127
and H. J. Schuchard. Polygonum hydropiper	21
Trinitrophenol from strychnine	255
Triodons Barranci, use in Mexico	387
Tropaeolum majus, use in Mexico	385
Troches of Crescentia alata, Ph. Mex.	440
of haemoglobin	416
Tubéreuse, in perfumery	135
Uncaria dasyoneura, U. gambir	313
Uncion fuerte, Ph. Mex.	548
Unguentum hydrargyri, Ph. Mex.	549
nitratiss	364
(ungüento) of Pharm. Mexicana (Agrippae, althaeae, arthanitae comp., basilicum, c. cantharid., cordiale, comtissae, cupri acet., fuscum, nervinum, ex Osorio, pallidum, ad scabiem Aldereti, seborum	548, 549
University of Wisconsin, Science Hall destroyed	54
of Michigan, School of Pharmacy vindicated	156
Unna, Dr. Keratin-coated pills	338
Urgevão (Stachytarpha) use in Brazil	335
Urine, test for bile	409
for blood	503
Urticaria, jaborandi for	335
Vaccinin, reactions	321
Vaccinium arctostaphylos, use	308
vitis-idaea, contains arbutin	321
Vanillin from benzoic acid	28
Varnish for tin and sheet iron	25
Vaselin as solvent for biniodide of mercury	612
Venable, F. P. Analysis of leaves of Ilex cassine	389
Veratria in muscular tremor	556
Veratrum frigidum, V. officinale, V. sabadilla, V. virescens, uses in Mexico	430

Verbena Aubletii, V. bracteosa, V. Caroliniana, V. chamaedrifolia, V. ciliata, V. erinoides, V. hastata, V. jamaicensis, V. multifida, V. officinalis, V. phlogiflora, V. tenerifolia, V. teneroides, V. urticifolia, uses.....	334, 335
ciliata, use in Mexico.....	603
Verbenaceae, useful plants.....	330
Vesicating insects, seat of active principle.....	350
Vincetoxin, preparation.....	238
Vinegar, antiseptic.....	173
Vino, (wines) of Pharm. Mexicana.....	549, 550
Vinum iodatum.....	241
c. extracto Smilacis medicae, Ph. Mex.....	550
magnoliae Mexicanae Ph. Mex.....	550
martiatum, Ph. Mex.....	550
scilliticum, Ph. Mex.....	549
Violette, in perfumery.....	136
Vitex agnus castus, V. incisa, V. negundo, V. trifolia, uses.....	331, 332
Viticin.....	332
Vrij, J. E. de. Extraction of alkaloids from cinchona barks by diluted acids.....	622
Viticin.....	332
Wainwright, J. Howard. Estimation of morphine.....	391
Waldwolle.....	99
Warden, C. J. H. Impurity in ether.....	148
and Waddie. Active principle of Cannabis indica.....	264
Warington, R. Detection of nitrous and nitric acids.....	399
Warts, carbonate of magnesia for.....	384
Water, detected in ether.....	151
cinnamon.....	591
distilled, impurities in.....	500
orange, from Grasse.....	132
from Florida.....	365
potable, purified.....	435
character of.....	527
rose, from Grasse.....	133
Waters, medicated.....	274
Wax, ocotilla.....	88
of Pharm. Mexican.....	386, 431
Weights, Mexican.....	231
Whooping cough mixture.....	384
Wiegand, Thomas S. Pills and excipients.....	593
Wild horehound (Eupatorium), use in the South.....	90
pepper (Vitex), use.....	332
sage (Lantana), use.....	332
Wilder, Hans M. Practical notes.....	24
Sirop de dentition.....	20
Will, W. Watson. Apparatus for continuous percolation with boiling liquids.....	149
Wine, detection of lead and copper.....	173
of coca in fatigue.....	543
of orange.....	504
Wines of Ohio.....	324
Xanthorrhoea arborea, X. Australis, X. hastilis, X. Preissii, X. minor, X. quadrangulata, X. semiplana, X. Tateana, resins of.....	405
Yerba dulce (Lippia).....	333
Zapania nodiflora, use.....	333
Zinc, valerianate, solubility in fatty bodies.....	609
Zonitis bilineata, Z. fulvipennis, Z. mutica, Z. praeusta, are vesicating	351
Zygophyllum Fabago, use in Mexico.....	601